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JANUARY AND JUNE:

BEING

Out-Door Thinkings,

AND

Fire-Side Musings.

BY

BENJ. F. TAYLOR.

Illustrated.

NEW-YORK:

SAMUEL HUESTON, 139 NASSAU STREET.

1854.

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TO

Stephen W. Taylor, LL.D.,

PRESIDENT OF MADISON UNIVERSITY,

WHO HAS PASSED A LIFE, 'LOOKING NATURE IN THE FACE,
AND INTERPRETING HER EXPRESSION, THIS LITTLE
VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

Preface.

A LITTLE Preface to a little Book is a jewel: so these random sketches are not portionless.

Some body has declared that 'water runneth by the Mill, the Miller wots not of;' and, for proof thereof, lo! here a little, caught in the hollow of one's hand. Not enough, indeed, to turn a wheel, but to quench, may-be, a rose's or a robin's thirst; to baptize an infant love of Nature; to sparkle in dews, on opening leaves of Thought.

Hark! says the mother, as she soothes the restless child. Now, Nature is the mother, and I—the child.



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Out-door Thinkings.

THE WORLD, now-a-days, live too much "*in the house* : " souls grow angular as the apartments they dwell in, and come, like them, to have parlors and pantries, closets and coal-holes ; views take color from the windows they are seen through ; muffled thoughts in listed slippers, walk on carpets, and the firm, free footfall upon the bare floors of this great caravansary, are not to be heard " by ears polite."

Sunlight, in-doors, is a nun and enters veiled ; or it is a "grocery," poured from a tin can ; or a chemical, conducted in an iron tube. The air, in-doors, must needs be beaten with fans, into a mockery of motion, and music, immured in rosewood and mahogany, is manumitted at intervals, by ivory fingers with ivory keys.

Whoever has time to look and listen, need only go out of doors, to wonder and be charmed. On any "quarter section" in the world, may be seen and heard, the alphabet of almost all thought, and the utterances of almost all tongues. This is not a discovery ; oh, no ! but only a wreath of vapor to the "cloud of witnesses" that have already testified.

Life.

THE pulses of great Nature never beat more audibly and musically than just about "the leafy month of June:" life, every where life, in field and flood, in earth, and air, and sky. Life in all forms : life with a sweet breath in it, life with a song in it, life with a *light* in it. Life tied up in little bags of most Quakerish-looking silk, by that sly spinner, the spider ; life done up in gray bundles, and hung upon apple trees ; deposited in little brown paper cups, or packed away in little clay cells, by gentry in yellow jackets, and gentry with delicate waists, whose only foible consists in their not being, always and altogether, like Job and Moses ; life hidden in the hearts

of ripening plums and reddening cherries—find a sweeter cradle any where, if you can ; life rocked in shells, put up in mother-of-pearl, set in ivory, chased with gold, consigned to little graves every where ; laid away in “ Patent Burial Cases ”—just where Fisk got the idea—and fastened to rails and fence-posts ; life, that, by and by, shall spread wings damp with the imprint of this great Stereotyping Establishment of the Almighty ; life standing “ on end,” in little boats, and rising into the air, taking to bugle-ing as soon as it is born, and evincing, by the presentation of “ bills ” at most unseasonable and unreasonable hours, a decided talent for ledger literature ; life sheltering itself beneath the leathern umbrella of the mushroom, revelling in the rose’s red heart, drilled into the solid rock, domiciled in mud hovels, along rafters and beneath eaves, “ playing in the plighted clouds,” “ laid ” in a manger, peeping from holes, floating in the air, swinging in the wind, skulking under the chips, burrowing in the earth, darting along rail fences, opening nankeen throats from little baskets of twigs, floating in tatters of green baize on the ponds, advocating Solomon on birch, “ poor Will,” talking Greek, “ *brekekek koax, koax*,” and practising hydro-pathy, *k’chug* ; life in bags and boxes, bundles and

blankets ; in silks, satins and shells; in "tights," and flounces, and feathers and flannels ; life full dressed and in dishabille ; life knocking from the centre of fallen logs ; knocking from the other side of shells white and blue, and mottled and dappled ; and June is

"The delegated voice of God,"

to bid them "come in, come up, come down, come out," and *be*, and do, and suffer ; conjugating and inflecting the great active verb—"LIVE."

Turn over the loam in the fields, and you turn out turtle's eggs by the score. Go "across lots" to the neighbor's, and you find the pearly treasures of the whistling quail by the dozen. Tap a sand-hill lightly, with the toe of your boot, and you will see the ladies to whom Solomon referred sluggards, by the myriad. Shake a bush, and you shake out a bird, or a peep, or a bug, or a bud, or something that's "all alive." Pluck a leaf, and you may find on it a crystal drop, such as one might dream Queen Mab would shed if "in the melting mood ;" but the sun shall "set" on it a few days, and out will come a thing all legs, or wings, or stings—something to hum or drum—to fly or creep, or crawl ; something to *be* something and some body, and count just as many in the great census

of Creation, as he who called the shades of Ashland his, or she who journeyed, of old, to see Solomon—count just as many, “in words and figures following,” to-wit : (1) *one*.

A M Y S T E R Y .

“THINGS are working” these June days. Things? *Wonders* withal. Why, quiet as it is here to-day, with nothing but green and blue in sight—the fields, the woods, and the sky—and not a sound of carpentry, save the incessant hammering upon tree-trunks, of worthies in red caps, there is more going on than one would dream of between the third call and breakfast-time ; things that Silliman couldn’t do, nor Davy, nor Liebig.

Do you see that cherry tree ? Every one of four bushels upon it. There’s a *ripe* one. Use your “pickers and stealers,” and pluck it. A cherry—red, ripe and rich. Fragrance and flavor done up in a red wrapper.

Set your cunning men that conjure with crucibles, to make one, and you “*set*” them of a surety. Depend upon *them*, and you might, and you would,

“make two bites of a cherry.” Yet on that modest tree, “out of doors,” that article was manufactured. No furnace sighing from morning till night—no workmen in white aprons—no sugar crushed, refined, snowy—no flour superfine—no vermilion in pot or powder—no parade, no bustle ; but there they are, “cherry ripe !”

Winter’s cold fingers were lifted from the pulses of the tree, and they throbbed full and strong. Pumps in the earth below, were rigged and manned. Signals were silently set in bud and blossom aloft. Winds came, and swung the branches, and peeped into this and that, and went away. Birds came and looked about, and saw nothing, and went too. Unseen hands were gathering, and moulding, and refining all the while. The sun came up from the Tropic of Capricorn, and looked on—nothing more. The clouds went dripping by, and never stopped, and that was all. ED., or SILAS, or some body, planted a cherry stone, four or five years ago, and forgot it ; but the “ whip ” of a tree went right on, and without any help that we can see, set up business, and manufactured Nature’s confectionary, all by itself. Last week the cherries were green—now they are tinted with red ; not a brush lying about, not a stained finger

visible. No advertisements in the newspapers, of "Painting done here ;" no "Apprentices wanted," for Nature's hands are all journeymen ; not a leaf with a capital or an exclamation point on it. Ah ! that "May Duke" belongs to the Royal Family of—Nature.

Pumpkins and Enterprise.

LAST summer, I remember, a little vine—a Pumpkin vine—came out of the ground in a cornfield, 'up the road,' and there it was, in the midst of the corn, unseeing and unseen. So there was nothing for it, but to make the best of its way out to the fence that bounded the road, some eighteen or twenty feet distant, where there would be some prospect of its being appreciated, if it could. Could ? But it *did*, for away it went, vine and leaves, baggage and all, through the corn, this way and that, out to the fence, and up the fence, three rails, and through the fence. And what do you think it did then ? Just unravelled a delicate yellow blossom, and held it there, for every one passing to see, saying all the time, as well as it could—and it could as well as any body—"It's *me* !

See what *I've* done—this! *Isn't* it pretty?" Well, there it held it, and every body saw it, and no body thought any thing about it.

Passing that way in the Fall, lo! a PUMPKIN, rotund, golden, magnificent, held out at arm's length by the little vine; held in the air—held week after week, and never laid down, nights, nor Sundays, nor *any* time.

Now, "man your brakes"—rig your levers, ye Archimedes-es, and pump up from the earth, and along that vine, and from the surrounding air, the *raw material* for just such another article as that, and you shall have *two* summers to do it in. Bring on the Alembic, wherein shall be distilled from the falling rain, the essence of Pumpkin, and we'll let it go without painting.

Death.

THE world is curved round about with Heaven, and Heaven never seems nearer than in June. Its great blue rafters bend low on every hand, and how one can get out of the world, without getting into Heaven, is to us a physical mystery.

Childhood enters life at the east, coming in, like a young swallow, beneath the eaves ; but like Desdemona's handkerchief, he is "little," and he stands erect under the low-curved roof. On he goes, into the middle of the world. How swells the dome above him, and manhood is erect still. But "westward, westward," is the word, and by and by, he bends his head beneath the roof. They *say* he is old—that the weight of years is on him—that he is looking for a place to sleep ; but it is only that he may *clear the rafters*. Low and lower does he bend, until, with form quite doubled, he creeps out just between Heaven and Earth, and is seen no more.

Death is not afraid of the sunshine, for he comes in June. The rustle of ten thousand leaves does not startle him ; the breath of ten thousand flowers does not charm him away. Indeed he *loves* flowers, for has not a dainty Singer declared that he reaps

" The bearded grain at a breath,
And the FLOWERS that grow between ! "

There's a house down in the valley—you can see it from my window—where, when they numbered their treasures, they said, and *kept* saying, "three, three, three," and there was melody in the monosyllable—a trinity of blessing in the "three ;" but

DEATH was counting all the while, and "one" he was numbering as his own, and *his* count—alas ! for it—was the surest. One star fell from the blue air ; it was Heaven aloft, still. One white rose drifted down to earth ; it was summer all the same. And so—and so *what* ? Philosophy may analyze a tear, but it cannot curve a hope in it—it cannot bid it "ex-hale." It may make a spectrum, but it cannot make a smile. And the text for this is a brief one :

DIED,

On Saturday night, the 18th of June,
End of the little week of Life,
And it is Sunday to-morrow and to-morrow,

EDITH J. DARLING,

Aged 13.

Amiable, she won all ; intelligent, she charmed
all ; fervent, she loved all ; and
dead, she saddened all.

Beside the little brother who had gone on before,
an empty chrysalis is lying. Who seeks EDITH ?
There *is* a realm where

" December's as pleasant as May"—

where it is June all the year long. There *is* a
Recording Angel, and a book lies open before him ;
and the page for " June 18th, '53," bears, in letters
of light, the name—EDITH.

A dream-eyed daughter of the "drowsy East" lost a favorite Gazelle. It wandered away in the Persian gardens, and its young Mistress had followed it all the long afternoon. It had come at her call ; it had eaten from her hand ; it had rested its head on her bosom ; it was timid, and she won it ; tender, and she cherished it ; helpless, and she *loved* it. And now it had gone ; the shadows were deepening and lengthening, and the lost was not found. All the afternoon she had traced it, by the imprint its little feet had left upon the enamelled and emerald sod ; but night came on, and, what for the tears and the darkness, the footsteps grew dim, like a half-effaced memory of something loved and lost.

She knelt upon the turf, and bending low, still read the records of the truant's wanderings, and followed them. But the shadows fell too heavily at last, and she sat among the flowers and wept ; and as she was mourning, there came to her the fragrance of a flower sweeter than its fellows, and with the sweetness came the thought, still sweeter : *her favorite's foot had crushed it*, till it uttered that fragrant sigh. So filled with hope, she followed the Gazelle through the darkness by the perfume in its pathway, and she found it at last, its lips reddened with red roses, its limbs laved

in white lilies, sweetly reposing in the "GARDENS OF PARADISE."

There was joy that night amid the darkness and dews. The maiden returned, but she left her heart in token that the treasure lying there was her own ; for she had read some where, but not in the Koran, "Where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also."

"O u r F o l k s ."

"OUR FOLKS"—we *have* folks ; folks of whose names, ages, and occupations the Census gives no account ; folks as good as *any* body's, "and these are of them :—" A flaunting, pompous, Pharisaical GRAPE VINE, with very broad, green phylacteries, bids fair to overrun the entire premises. It made its appearance, I am told, near the kitchen-door, a few years ago, in a very meek, unostentatious manner—a statement, considering the "complexion to which it has come at last," requiring about as much credulity as there is vine, to believe. Its aspirations were soon manifested in the display of divers mermaidish-looking ringlets,

with two or three dainty “quirls” therein, flung out to the wind, and fluttering very gaily indeed.

Its ambitious tendencies being early discovered, a frame, large enough to satisfy any thing short of a *Corsican* ambition, was erected ; and the Vine roofed it, and walled it, and festooned it, and hung rich clusters of grapes around it, and filled it with fragrance, and *broke it down*, and—and *what* ? That’s just it—and what should it do next ? Those green ringlets were set afloat again, and the Vine made most insidious advances towards a respectable Apple Tree that stood near ; which, being young, and inexperienced in the wiles and ways of Catawbas, Isabellas, and the like, permitted its attentions. So the Vine encircled its waist very lovingly with a tendril and a *tendresse* that would have been pronounced “quite the thing” in the first circles. Any body would have supposed, for a while, that it would be whirling away with the Apple Tree in a waltz through the Orchard. It did no such thing ; but just clambered up higher and higher, and swayed this way and that, and whispered, and swung, and caressed, and made itself as agreeable as possible. By and by, it half said, half sighed, ‘Let me fling a wreath over you, sweet Tree,’ and a wreath it was.

‘Just a festoon or two;’ and festoons almost hid the poor Tree from view.

Now the Vine crept up, *sans ceremonie*, put out its great broad leaves, and disposed its clusters to the sun and in the shade *alamode*, and thought nothing of the means whereby it had gotten “up in the world.” Meanwhile, its victim struggled on a year or two; paid a feeble tribute to Flora, and a feebler one to Pomona—if that’s her name—while the Vine heaped the Summer on its half-leafless branches, and rolled up like a great green billow into the sun. Not content with this, the unprincipled thing paid its addresses to a Peach Tree, and more than half ruined it; but the Tree bore it all patiently, and never said a word, and never “peached.” And so the Vine keeps “going on,” to the great “taking on” of all orderly Apple and Peach Trees, and the great scandal of the neighborhood.

ANOTHER OF THEM.

A GENTLEMAN in a suit of sober brown pays daily *devoirs* and devours to a Cherry Tree near the house. Taking one or two of the ripened rubies, dainty fellow that he is, he sits and amuses himself by the hour, echoing the various notes that are uttered around

him. He is a decided Robin, a querulous Cat-bird, a veritable Thrush, and a positive Goldfinch, by turns, and sometimes, as if a hand-organ should go crazy, and play all its tunes at once, he gives them all together. The northern MOCKING BIRD is a "character," though he has none of his own, and never was known to utter an original idea upon music in his life. He has many relatives who never wear feathers except in hats and bonnets, and whose chief merit is that of a blank wall, saying nothing of themselves, but giving back imperfectly, the utterances of others.

This worthy in October brown is not a Bachelor, as one might surmise by his freedom from care, and light merry air, but a very respectable Benedict. His family, three members—one died in shell-dom—reside in a little Oak tree across the road, and are nearly ready to leave the old homestead, and "do for themselves." What a medley of Sparrows and Quails, of Blue Jay and Robin, lies within the circumference of that little nest; and they are all "Our Folks."

"AND SO ON."

EVERY evening, a little after sunset, a WHIPPOORWILL takes up his position and his trisyllabic song on a fallen tree, not far from the house. A queer bird,

careless in domestic matters—for it builds no nest of any account—it sits and sings through the deepening twilight on into the moonlight; and if you creep sufficiently near, you will see that it positively beats time with its little foot upon the log, and hear, between the strains, a click like that of a clock just as it strikes the hour.

A rare Music Box is the Whippoorwill, manufactured, tuned, and wound by the same fingers that keyed the spheres to their sublime harmonies.

“LITTLE JEMMY.”

AND there’s “JEMMY,” a little top-knotted, green-coated Canary of some five months, that sits in his cage, crumbles his cracker, notches his fresh lettuce, cracks his Canary seed, makes his toilet, and ogles the Yellow Birds that ride around his prison on the swells of the air.

A while ago, Jemmy was slightly depressed, and “for cause,” as will be seen. Relying too much on the twist in the conjugal tie, LUCY—*she’s* one of “Our Folks,” but the Census Takers have her “description”—suffered Jemmy’s wife, NELLY, to fly out to a Lilac Tree in front of the house, supposing, of course, she would fly *back* on wings of love; but the swaying

boughs, the free air, and, I sadly fear, the blandishments of some unprincipled Lothario of a Goldfinch, were too much for poor Nelly's virtue, and she never returned to her allegiance; so Jemmy has kept Bachelor's Hall ever since.

"Nelly was a lady;" at least, so we all thought; but, the other day, she made her appearance in a Peach Tree, right in sight of her lord and master—decidedly the worst thing I know of her—accompanied by a suspicious-looking fellow in buff waistcoat and "inexpressibles." We didn't—"Our Folks"—much approve of the twitterings and chirpings between them; but Jemmy is a good deal of a philosopher; so he turned about upon his perch as *nonchalant* as a Regent Street fashionable. There was a little swelling in his throat. Was it a rising sigh? Nothing of the sort; for he warbled a ditty—not of the strongest, we confess, but then musical, resigned, Jemmy-like—the burden of which was, as nearly as I could make it out, something like this: "Not a—*whistle*—for Nelly, Nell, Nelly, give I; not a—*warble*—a *twitter*—a *quaver*—care I. This—*crotchet*—of Nelly's a—*minim*—to me!" The very day that Nelly deserted Jemmy's perch and pickings, a driving storm swept over the country, and there was a sound

of great lamentation for Nelly ; but, alas ! she was left to a worse fate. There is no telling what Coquettes, or Canaries, or *any* of us may come to, if left to ourselves.

P.—AN EVERLASTING PEA.

AN EVER-LAST-ING PEA—the last of “ Our Folks ” to-day—a sweet thing to look at, but with no more breath than an Oyster, has been growing neglected beside the door for a long time. Several impudent Burdocks and saucy Pigweeds had grown over it and around it ; and there it was without a frame, a staff, or even a *thread* to help itself with, and climb out of the way, up into the air, and be beautiful, and be admired.

There it was, struggling alone, and running all over the ground, and getting no where, when, one day, a bolder branch, that had gone out some where for succor, discovered the Lightning Conductor. *There* was a way up and out, indeed ; and why shouldn't a PEA as well as a PEOPLE run on a Rail ? And here was an aërial Railway, ready and in “ running order,” for the creeper and climber. So it encircled the cold iron, and swung itself up ; and whither it might have gone, and what it might have done, is more than

any body knows ; but a frame—such as it was—was built, and the truant tethered with a string. One thing it did was this : laid a blushing leaf close to the cold, dark iron. And what for ? Why, claiming *relationship*, of a truth. Iron tinted that leaf to “the color of virtue.” Iron makes those Roses glow in their new frames beside the path. Indeed, one could almost write poetry without *inspiration*, only give him plenty of *iron* :

The jarring of the iron wheels along the iron rails ;
The anvils with their iron din beneath the iron flails ;
The panting of the iron forge ; the twang of iron wire ;
The music of an iron age ; of iron and of fire ;
The netting of the iron nerve that's thrilling through the
world ;

The iron bayonet to the bolt by glittering tempests hurled ;
The thunder of the iron loom ; the shuttle's plunging steel ;
The weaving of the zones of earth—five ribbons round a
reel ;

The couplet of the iron song, of which TWO BARS are sung,
That makes as dear as “household words” the Anglo-Saxon
tongue ;

The clanking of the iron Press, the echo of the Age,
While waking Thought, with iron tread, leaves foot-prints
on the page ;

All sinews are of iron now ; all breathings are of fire ;
And engines with their iron hearts can toil and never tire ;
The winds are lulled, but iron craft are panting round the
globe ;

And iron needles ravel out old Ocean's seamless robe.
In calm Pacific's golden—

but, 'tis a *hard* theme ; and, printers permitting, I'll "mind my P's and Q's" again. There was something of almost classic beauty in the sight : a green, luxuriant vine encircling a rude bayonet, fixed by the fingers of Philosophy, against the lightnings of Heaven ; the rusty route of the thunder-bolt wreathed in the beauty of Summer ; a token of amity extended upon the "present arms" of Science to the tempest ; an offering from the warm bosom of a June earth to the genii of the cloudy caverns of the air.

Does some body ask you what you think of "OUR FOLKS ?" Pray, don't mind me ; but utter it boldly, like a Jeffreys.

J e w e l r y .

NATURE was out in her Jewelry this morning, or, as some body's little Charley, or Molly, or Johnny would say, in her "*Dewelry*," and that's just the word wanted—glittering with the young rain that waits its wings.

By the way, that Nimrod in science who went hunting the DEW, and made a fame that shall last forever : Wasn't it a pretty idea when, placing the

bulbs of delicate thermometers in the bosoms of lilies and the hearts of young roses, he felt the pulses of the flowers as they grew? Wasn't it fairy-like work for a mortal man to be doing?

And then, when he found that the buds and the blossoms were all the cooler as they needed moisture the more; and the truth sparkled out that Dew is the invisible vapor floating in the air, which, chilled by the cool surfaces of the flowers, *bursts into tears* over the beauty that must fade; and when he found that this aërial, this gossamer-winged water, is the singing, and sighing, and cursing, and blessing of all day yesterday—the music of the Summer all written out in legible score—notes sparkling and beautiful, every one—do you think a civic crown could have made him greater or happier?

And when he found that in cloudy nights, when there was no Dew, it was because the heat radiated from the earth, was reflected down again from the clouds, and so, like a beautiful pendulum, it vibrated to and fro—the clods and the clouds, the clouds and the clods—and the earth could not grow cold, and its breath could not condense, and there, beneath the stars, like the pulses of a mighty breast, beating softly against the downy covering of cloud all the night

long !—would our Hunter, do you think, have changed fames with the tinker of the clock of Strasburg ?

There is one little circumstance—most awkward word is that “circumstance”—which perhaps I should bid adieu to the Dewes without noting : that they have sparkled for decades of centuries, and every body, from the bards of a thousand years to the last scribbler for a scrap-book, has likened them to every thing, and every thing to them, that is lucent and lovely, and blessed and beautiful ; and YET, all the while, until a few days or so ago, no body knew where they were born, whether they rose, or fell, or flew, or, as children say, “just come o’ *themselves*.” And YET philosophers, or “so they say,” gurgled Hebrew before Remus was “naughty” to his brother, and leaped Rome’s wall.

Few there are, who dream how blessed and beautiful, sad and solemn, are the components of Dew ; and here is a *recipe* therefor :

J u n e D e w s .

The breath of the leaves and the lyrics of dawn
Were floating away in the air ;
The brooks and the birds were all singing aloud ;
The violets looking a prayer,
With eyes that upturned so tearful and true,
Like Mary’s of old, when forgiven,

Had caught the reflection and mirrored it there,
As bright and as melting as heaven.
The silvery mist of the red robin's song,
Slow swung in the wind-wavered nest;
The billows that swell from the forests of June,
Almost to the blue of the blest;
"The bells" that are rung by the breath of the breeze,
And "toll their perfume" as they swing;
The brooks that are trolling a tune of their own,
And dance to whatever they sing;
The groan of the wretched, the laugh of the glad,
Are blent with the breath of a prayer;
The sigh of the dying, the whisper of love,
A vow that was broken, are there!
There dimly they float, 'mid the ripe, golden hours,
Along the bright trellis of air;
The smothered good-bye, and the whisper of love,
The ban and the blessing are there!
Cool fingers are weaving the curtains again,
Whose woofing is netted with stars;
The tremulous woods on the verge of the world,
Just bending beneath the blue spars,
Are valanced with crimson and welted with gold.
Where now are the vesper and vow—
Those spirit-like breathings of sadness and song,
That brought not a cloud o'er the brow,
Bedimmed not a beam of the bright summer morn?
Not wafted away, for the aspen is still;
Not fled on the wings of the hours;
Not hiding the heaven—lo! the stars in the clear;
Not perished, but here on the flowers—
Those smiles of Divinity lighting the world,
Whose breath is for ever a prayer;
Who blush without sinning, and blanch without fear;
Oh! where *should* they be, if not there?

Finished.

THERE is a beautiful significance in the fact that when Divinity would build a temple for Himself on earth, he commanded that it should rise without the sound of hammer, and so,

“Like some tall pine, the noiseless fabric grew.”

The HAMMER is the emblem of man's creations. About his *rarest* works you will find it ; hidden in a corner, resting on a column, lying behind a statue ; it is *some where*. Heap about the pedestal whereon stands the “GREEK SLAVE” the chips and the chisels, the gravers and the hammers, and how is the magic of the marble diminished or destroyed ! It is no longer a being waked from the sleep of creation, throwing off its Parian shroud, and only waiting the whisper of Omnipotence to breathe, but a stone, blasted, and pried, and tugged, and lifted from some body's quarry ; perforated, and chipped, and hewn ; modelled in clay by a man in an apron, and wrought out “by the hardest” by macaroni-eating barbarians in short jackets and blue caps. The dead waking, the dumb eloquent, the silent thought shaping out and

indwelling the marble, all vanish, "like the baseless fabric of a vision," at the sight of a hammer. The Yankee 'sees into it,' and 'guesses' a lathe could be made 'to *turn*' the thing out in half the time, and is 'sure as preaching' he was born to make it. He wonders if it couldn't be 'run' in a mould; if plaster wouldn't do as well; whether the least '*tich*' of red paint wouldn't make her lips 'kinder' human, and a pink skirt more like a Christian? He 'can't see why' it should cost 'such a *tarnal* sight;' and where are the beauty and the poetry of the GREEK SLAVE? Ask, "Where are the birds that sang an hundred years ago?" as well.

In the construction of this great Temple of the World, find, if you can, a moulding, a cornice, an architrave, with a rivet in it; any puttying of nails, or hiding of seams, or painting over of patches. Oh! no; every thing is finished, no matter where, no matter how you find it. All the blue masonry of Night was done without trowel or hammer. No quick clip of scissors scalloping the leaves of ten thousand flowers; no ring from the mighty anvil, whence scintillate, nightly, the sparks of starry time; no brushes, or pencils, or patterns, lying about rose-trees and woodbines; no "staging" discovered round the

oak as it goes up ; no mortising machines nor mallets beneath it, though the great arms securely fastened to the column, are swaying bravely aloft.

Who ever sat up late enough at night, or rose long enough before the sun in the morning, to find any thing *unfinished* ? If a bud, 'twas done ; if a blossom, perfect ; a leaf or a leaflet, alike nonpareil. Bid the "Seven Wise Men of Greece" sit in solemn conclave over a budded rose, and what one of them would dream there was any thing more to be done, any thing more to be desired ?

Who ever detected, any where, a leaflet half fashioned or a flower half painted ? a brush's careless trail on some little thing that peeps out of the cleft of a rock, and dodges back again at a breath ; some little thing of no consequence, that no body hardly ever, if ever, sees ? Ah ! no ; as delicately finished, fashioned, and perfumed, as if it had bloomed in the conservatory of a queen, and been destined for the wreath that encircles her brow.

Every thing of Heaven's handiwork is finished, from first to last ; from the Plan of Salvation, 'finished' upon Calvary, to the violet 'finished,' that opens its blue eye to the dew.

“Bugs” and Beauties.

FOR the last five minutes, a MILLER in a dusty suit of “silver gray” has been fluttering round the candle. Yesterday afternoon, his royal cousin, the BUTTERFLY, that some body, so Cowley-like, called “a winged flower,” was fluttering round a sunbeam. But no dusty miller was this, in sober gray, for when Nature painted it, she spared no tint of the richest and rarest that would render it beautiful—that would “show” in the sun. There’s a fellow in dark brown now, creeping over the sheet as I write. It stopped at the word, ‘Butterfly,’ and crawled contemptuously over it. This Mr. Brown is never seen in the daytime, but looks well enough by lamplight, starlight, or moonlight. Any thing more would be useless, because “unsight, unseen,” as the boys say. Had it been other than a night-walker, it would have been spotted with gold, specked with vermilion, tricked out with indigo-blue legs, or rigged with transparencies. Nature is altogether an artist, and though with all the dyes of the rainbow at command, and to spare, exhibits a most remarkable and commendable economy

in her adornings. Show me a flower opening only at night, and I will almost always show you one that has taken the white veil or affects a demure gray. She is equally judicious in her varnishing: the upper surfaces of millions of leaves—how glossy and polished! Three coats of paint and six of varnish, by the palette of Reubens! But the lower surfaces, just as nice, but neither so green nor so glossy; it would be of no use, and besides, they could not breathe freely through new paint.

Speaking of coloring: isn't it a little queer, or is it just as might be expected, that JOHN GALT should come all the way across the ocean, out of two thicknesses of London fog, to tell people "to the manor born" what color an American sky is, in the summer, toward sunset? Or that they should marvel to learn it is an *apple-green*—the reflection of those great emeralds of earth, the Prairies, and those miles on miles of forest billows, that roll up and up, and fling their green spray into heaven? Poetasters, poor fellows! how blank they'd look—*wouldn't* they?—should a law be passed, forbidding their babble about azure, blue, and cerulean skies; and they compelled, if they spoke at all, to say, 'Oh! apple-green heavens!'

Nature is not half so pains-taking with very early

morning as with the later day, and for the best reason in life, there's no body “up” to see. So she makes it a neat steel-gray, inlaying a piece or two of pearl here and there, and looping up round the edges, a few odd bits of red ribbon. Noon she doesn't mind much. To be sure the coloring is rich and warm, but then, nothing like a master-piece. But ‘come night,’ when the labor of the world is pretty near done, she ‘lays herself out’ in the West, exactly where every body would naturally be looking, and gathers there, the pearl and gold of morning, the glow and glory of noon, and the Tyrian tints of night. She spreads there, unbended rainbows from dismantled clouds; she gives there, patterns for the sea-shells to tint by—a red and a white that set the pattern for York and Lancaster—themes for a thousand preachers, and songs for a thousand bards.

On such a night, in such a June, who has not sat, side by side, with some body, for all the world like “Jenny June?” May-be it was years ago; but it was *some* time. May-be you had quite forgotten it; but you will be the better for remembering it. May-be she has “gone on before,” where it is June all the year long, and never January at all; but God forbid!

There it was, and then it was, and thus it was:

The Beautiful River.

Like a Foundling in slumber, the summer day lay
On the crimsoning threshold of Even,
And I thought that the glow through 'the azure-arched'
way,
Was a glimpse of the coming of Heaven.
There together we sat by the beautiful stream :
We had nothing to do, but to love and to dream,
In the days that have gone on before.
These are not the same days, though they bear the same
name,
With the ones I shall welcome no more.

But it may be, the angels are culling them o'er,
For a Sabbath and Summer for ever,
When the years shall forget the Decembers they wore,
And the shroud shall be woven, no, never!
In a twilight like that, Jenny June for a bride,
Oh! what more of the world could one wish for beside,
As we gazed on the River unroll'd,
Till we heard, or we fancied, its musical tide,
When it flowed through the Gate-way of gold?

Jenny June, then I said, let us linger no more,
On the banks of the beautiful River—
Let the boat be unmoored, and be muffled the oar,
And we'll steal into Heaven together.
If the Angel on duty our coming deseries,
You have nothing to do but throw off the disguise
That you wore while you wandered with me,
And the Sentry shall say, "Welcome back to the skies;
We have long been a-waiting for thee."

Oh! how sweetly she spoke, ere she uttered a word,
 With that blush, partly hers, partly Even's,
 And that tone, like the dream of a song we once heard,
 As she whispered, '*That way is not Heaven's*;
 For the River that runs by the realm of the Blest
 Has no song on its ripple, no star on its breast—
 Oh! *that* River is nothing like this!
 For it glides on in shadow, beyond the world's west,
 Till it breaks into beauty and bliss.'

I am lingering yet, but I linger alone,
 On the banks of the Beautiful River.
 'Tis the *twin* of that day, but the wave where it shone,
 Bears the willow tree's shadow for ever!

PLOUGHSHARES AND SORROWS.

GREAT grief in the clover just now, and every body *but* "Rachel, weeping for her children." For a few days past, they have kept a thing, a machine, a monster, going in the Clover Field, that they call a "breaking-up plough," and it is well named for an ill business; inasmuch as it interferes with more domestic arrangements, and destroys more domestic happiness and hopes, than "Consuelo" or the Last War—in fact, it *breaks up* whole families.

Talk about "beating swords into ploughshares!"

If this identical implement had been turned into a dozen good broad-swords, in these "piping times of peace," it would have hastened the Millennium, at least one generation, in the Meadow back of the Orchard.

What John Rogers-like families of infant mice were orphaned; what snug and cozy little homes were destroyed, no body can tell. If all ploughmen were poets, and all poets were Burns-es, and all Burns-es had sung,

"But, mousie, thou art not alane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us naught but grief and pain
For promised joy,"

it wouldn't mend the matter; it wouldn't turn back the turf, nor restore the wee ones to their "mither" again.

Two of the beautifully dappled eggs of the Meadow lark were brought in by one of the 'boys,' this morning, thus left without "a local habitation;" furnishing, so it seems to us, an admirable escapement for the overflowing philanthropy that renders so many people so very miserable. *Wouldn't* "a nest for the nestless" society be just the thing! And if some-

body, whose sympathies have been “ wool-gathering ” at the sources of the White Nile, would volunteer to—I feel a delicacy about suggesting it—to—to *hatch* the eggs aforesaid, two innocents would be spared an untimely fate. They are wrapped in cotton-wool, awaiting orders. “ References exchanged.”

Fire has also been called into requisition, to finish the work commenced by the share. Hard by a brush-heap, a Quail had hidden her summer hopes—sixteen spotless eggs—a cup full of pearls; within which, ere long, “ Spiritual Rappings ” should be heard, and a brood of life emerge, and skulk away, each with his cradle of a shell upon his back. The sad story is soon told; they set fire to the pile, that was to become a funeral-pyre; the brush sparkled and blazed, the logs kindled and glowed, but the bird, Phœnix-like, sat upon her nest. The flames surged around her, but when the dark volumes of smoke lifted, ‘ our bird was still there.’ The red fire at last, drove over the nest; the very straws were lighted, and the mother whirled despairingly away with a cry of anguish, and was seen no more. Many a heart heaves the twin billows of Circassian bosoms to-day, neither so true nor so wrung, as the little morsel of irritable muscle in the breast of that Quail mother

Many a marble has been graven and set up over less worth. Many an eloquent tribute has been paid to the memory of a less melancholy fate.

“ Our Defences.”

WHO talks of arsenals and armories—of Colt’s Revolvers and “Dupont’s best,” when, on this quiet farm, in this peaceful neighborhood, where every body believes in the New Dispensation, Elihu Burritt, and Universal Brotherhood, there are more weapons of war, aggressive and defensive, than ever followed the Roman Eagles to conquest ?

Why, you can meet any where, gentlemen in black, who wear rapiers, that are whipped out-upon cause the slightest — I always give them a wide berth — and whole *communities* of individuals, engaged in “the SUGAR trade,” to say nothing of “the cotton line,” that carry blades, Toledo-tempered every one of them, and make nothing of *using* them too.

Under that pile of plank, boards a WATCHMAN, one of Nature’s own “Charlies,” springing a rattle that “Old Hays” would have patented, and flourishing a case of lancets that Cooper would have coveted.

Chivalry is here ; for gallant knights in long spurs, stalk about the yards, and challenge each other from the tops of the fences. A genius crept out of the grass yesterday, with shield and breast-plate, like an old Roman. It was, as if one should invert a huge shell card-basket, give it a serpent's head, an elephant's feet, and a lizard's “continuation,” inscribe it all over with Chinese characters, and “let it run.”

Every evening, a Worthy of the QUILL comes rustling out from under the barn; quills behind his ears; quills under his arms; in fact, a back-load of quills. A very pungent, pointed author is he, with his quills; has talent for a modern critic, would work for his board, and ought to be encouraged.

Go “across lots” to CHARLES', and you will catch glimpses of pairs of little heels without owners, twinkling in every direction: GOPHERS going for quarters. Unfitted for a field fight, too weak for a *sortie*, they are prepared to stand a *siege* in their subterranean fastnesses. Set your Sappers and Miners to unearth the Garrison, and they will find the fortress deserted and the Gophers *gone*; for they have a proverb among them—those Gophers—that has been rudely translated into English, thus: “There are more ways than one.”

Do you see that glitter between the trees? It's a magnificent trinket, of which Nature has left a number hereabouts. It's a mirror, and how it came here, and all about it, is, as nearly as any body knows, in this wise. Some day or other, NATURE made her toilet here, preparatory to going out upon the Prairies; and while she was arranging her hair, putting on her flowered sandals, and letting down her broidered skirts, that she had gathered up as she crossed the Alleghanies, she caught a glimpse of the Prairie she had come to smile on, and forgot she was in dishabille, and left her "things"—mirrors, and flounces, and furbelows, and all—scattered about, and never thought of them again, for away she tripped and smiled.

Well, that glitter you see, is one of the "aids to reflection" she threw aside as she ran, and it was shattered into ever so many beautiful fragments, and among them is PINE LAKE, where, "an you will," we are this very instant. It's a sunny day; we, upon the margin of the Lake; the water, crystal; you, looking down. And looking, you see, lying motionless, a NAVIGATOR older than Noah or Jason, or any of those "outside barbarians;" a sailor whose fore-fishes were literally of 'the first water.'

Gaily attired, *isn't* he?—in a close-fitting suit of three-cent pieces, with a row of gold dollars on each side, all laid over and over. Your shadow lies along the water; move a little, and you'll see that the fellow's Defences are altogether with Valor's *wife*, his “better part,” Discretion. But first, lest you cannot, a moment hence, see that oar lying carelessly over the stern of the silvery craft. Now move. There! Wasn't that a specimen of scientific ‘sculling!’ Just a flash or two, like a little seimeter, and Navigator, three-cent pieces, oars and all are out of sight like a Nautilus, without a “Clearance,” a signal, a “by your leave,” or any thing of the sort.

Speaking of Signals: there's some body creeping through the grass, every night, with a lantern, and there are more than one of them—both bodies and lanterns; and it's either love or war; a battle-lantern or a love-light, and it makes little difference which: they may be skirmishing, they are certainly ‘*sparking*.’ The GLOW WORM is the owner of that light, and, little brown creature as it is, it has a rare and beautiful possession—finding, may be, its way through the night; signalling, it may be, the “Allied Powers,” in some tremendous war that “John S. C. Abbott” never heard of; seeking, perhaps, its mate.

There's a black bug, homely as sin. Catch him, and he gives you a glimpse of a diamond he is carrying about him ; and you spare him, of course, because he is one of Night and Nature's jewellers. How gallantly he 'shows a light,' in the offing over the marsh. On the starboard, the larboard ; to windward, to leeward ; alow and aloft. But the dawn steals on, and the great stars and the little bug together, "pale their ineffectual fires."

The first two "signs"—if any body will credit it—have slipped the halter of the Zodiac, and ARIES and TAURUS are lords of the pasture, trumpeters of flock and herd, with two horns a-piece. A slight accident to the mason-work about Jericho, recorded in Bible History, having been particularly impressed upon my mind, I pay special attention to Geography, as defined by a very devious rail fence, and take good care to keep on *this* side of it, confessing to no *penchant* for swelling a concordance, by figuring in a "parallel passage."

So it is, every where, with every thing. Armed cap-à-pie, and if not armed, supplied with some means of evasion, disguise or retreat. This moment, a fellow of the BEETLE tribe comes hurtling through the air, tumbling about in the candle-light, blundering against

walls and windows, with his everlasting hum-drum of wings, like a bee in a hollyhock. And what do you think *he's* done? Caught up a pair of *tongs* and joined in the grand melee! There he goes, if you don't believe it, the tongs thrust out in front of him, wide open, and ready to come lovingly together with a will. *Try* him, if you doubt it.

"*Tr-tr-trr-rt-rt-rrt!*" There's a watchword, or a pass-word from that cherry tree; and where is the little Look-out? On that leaf "with a strange device." By St. Patrick! 'tis a TOAD in disguise! Nothing like the salient chap in a dusty leather roundabout, that takes position nightly on the 'outside cellar door,' but a gay fellow. Break the limb, gently—so; and you have him exactly under your eye. His delicate white kid throat works like a little bellows. His back—just the color of the leaf he lies on, and how beautifully varnished!—four or five coats, shouldn't you think? His sides—a specimen of imitation of woods, that might deceive Leather Stocking himself. His eyes—overlaid round about with gold-leaf, and warranted never to tarnish. Invisible in his Kendall green, (if it *be* Kendall,) he uses those compound levers of his, and leaps from tree to tree and bough to bough, prophesying, in a

small way, of clouds and rain, and such like, and answering from out the rustling green, to his fellow.

What then are your Springfield Armory, your Paixhans, and even your floating walls of wood, to the arms and munitions of war strown about this quiet farm? What shields and helmets! what coats of mail and disguises! what broadswords and rapiers! what signals and war-cries! what prowess and stratagem are here! In the grass, the bushes the earth; on trees, fences, every where! Who will not say, that in comparison with "OUR DEFENCES," all the devices of your cunning workers in iron and in steel, are children's idle toys!

Digging for a Subject.

DON'T say a word till I'm done. You'll waste an invoice of indignation that were better saved, if you do; and besides, it wouldn't be "manners." I am no *resurrectionist*; and if I do dig for a "subject," I don't find it in a cemetery nor put it in a sack, but just take the head—mind! the *head*—as Herodias did, and serve it up, not on a platter, but on a paper, as Herodias didn't. Taking a hoe this morning, (could

find no spade but the *acc*.) I exhumed a TOADESS, perhaps a widow, living all by herself, in underground lodgings, as widows have done, and will do, again and again, till there is no such thing as widowdom in the world. She had two nice little apartments, but not much to speak of in the way of furniture. "I confess to a twinge or two, after the mischief was done ; but Sir Christopher Wren could not have restored the structure, so I concluded to "sin no more," took the hoe "trail arms," and returned penitent.

You read History ? Oh, of course ! but I don't mean Gibbon, or Hume or Bancroft ; nothing bound in calf or Turkey, that one reads between naps, lying along sofas ; that reviewers take as texts for their learning, and every body grows wise over. Oh, no ! But such history as you dig out with a hoe, throw out with a shovel, pry out with a lever, cut out with an axe, watch for in the woods, or climb after in the mountains. Loose leaves of great, unbound volumes, lying about this earth ; sometimes packed away, and sometimes fluttering in the wind ; volumes bearing the imprint of the Almighty ; leaves damp from the press of Creation ; lithographs older than the rock of Plymouth ; paintings newer than June roses.

In the burglary I have owned to, I found fragments of stone ; unquestionably an ARMORY, long ago deserted, and its existence forgotten. In it were packed away, thousands of lunar-shaped shields, bearing evident marks of having seen much service ; armor, as appears from records extant, worn by warriors who fought and fell before Cæsar thought of his “ Commentaries,” or the World of Cæsar. Housewives convert this same armor to the ignoble purpose of polishing brass andirons and Britannia tea-urns, and degrade it with their christening, “*Rotten Stone!*” Think of using Washington’s sword to scrape a trencher ; wetting up meal for chickens in Marmion’s helmet, or covering a coop with the shield of Achilles ! And what better is this robbing and desecrating the WESTMINSTER of some nation, not nameless because we *think* so, and bearing away the relics of older warriors, and who knows but better, to replenish ‘ the stock in trade ’ of kitchens and coal-holes ? “ To what *base* uses may we come at last ! ”

Proof-sheets of great works on Entomology and Conchology are scattered about here, lithographed by a Master : leaves whose like has not fluttered in morning air for centuries ; flowers that have not scented evening sighs since the days of Paradise ; all there

in the stone ; not a fibre or filament wanting, not a thread drawn from the delicate texture.

The running brook by the mill was making History, don't you think ?—when it left its old channel, dim, dumb and dusty, and meandered a new artery in the bosom of Earth. It is *making* History, when rounding and polishing the pebbles, those chronometers of the hours since its journey and carol began. It is *revising* History, when it sweeps away the veteran "witnesses" of old surveys, that marked the boundaries of battle-fields and the metes of kingdoms. It is *restoring* History, when it clears away the sand from rock bearing the legible foot-prints of a race whose legendary form and fame had faded from the lidless eye of Time—

"Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er Life's solemn main,
A forlorn and ship-wreck'd brother,
Seeing, may take heart again."

An OAK felled, the other day, in "the heavy timber," close by, had been making History these three hundred years, with its three hundred concentric rings ; swept, every one, with the widening compasses of vegetable life ; every one a symbol of a circling year. And they rived into *rails* this veteran Histo-

rian, that commenced his work before the frozen germ of New-England drifted into the dead of December in the cup of a May Flower ! What Goth or Vandal migrated from the Old World to the New ?

Dig a ditch, and you cut the untrimmed leaves of the Archives of the World. Climb a hill, and in undulating plains, and swelling heights, and deep-graved vales, the prospect reveals the *basso rilievo* of ocean ; the sculpture of billows that died, time out of mind, along sands ; sands that turned to stone ; stone that was hewn into temples ; temples that mouldered to dust ; dust that was flung to the winds ; winds that swelled the sails of the Argonauts. And the SCULPTURE ? *The Sculpture is there still !*

By the evidence of three pickaxes and a shovel, there is something in the earth, besides sassafras and silver, ginseng and gold. Now, Poetry is a great deal more like " Roots and Herbs " than people generally suppose, perhaps. Every verb has a root, and verbs are the great staple in epic poetry, for the *action*—that's the Verb—" the *play's* the thing : " so the Iliad is as full of roots as a potato patch. It will not seem so *very* strange then, that Poetry has been dugged from the earth with a shovel ; poetry that Homer never matched—and when one has said Homer, he

has said all ; and there it stands yet, a solitary *line*, and not a couplet. A line expressed by the human hand ; a thought at whose utterance the tongue faltered and the pen failed ; and this was the sentiment : *Let the gray ATLANTIC wed the wave of blue ERIE.* And this was all ; but little as it was, Alexandrian Libraries could not contain its full expression. The proud Doge of Venice takes the Adriatic Sea to be his bride, and drops into her bosom, a rich gold ring in token ; but here was a greater thought waiting utterance. Aye, waiting utterance ! for though the Orator had rounded it into his periods, and the Bard had sung of it, they had not spoken *it* : *it* was not sung ! The linen from a thousand looms could not make a sheet broad enough for its record ; the press was not built that could print it ; and so its Author wrote it—that one line—across the broad breast of the " Empire State." Wrote it with spade and mattock ; blasted it out with powder ; lifted it out with crowbars. Then, idle rills that did nothing but sparkle and run, were woven into a strong, broad strand—a crystal tie—and flung like a ribbon, from Erie to the Main ! Noble " decoration " for the breast of New-York !

He—that Author—had carved out a River. He

had woven its waters of the skeins of brooks. He had wedded the twain. He had conceived and uttered a thought. And there it was, in one great, glorious line, of a poem yet to be completed, when some Milton, gifted with the eloquence of the hand, shall spurn the cradle of some coming Age.

Is it any less a line, that it was traced upon the green and golden scroll of the globe? Any less a sentiment, that it was uttered with a shovel? And he, CLINTON! is he not as much an author, as if, occupying an apartment walled in with learned nonsense, he had written upon "superfine satin post?"

Ah! if the Babel-cleft world ever claim a common tongue, and own a common kindred, it will be when the SAXON HAND shall forge a great dialect, needing neither lexicographer nor lexicon, "known and read of all men." A language that has ringing hammers and jarring wheels, rustling fields and harvest songs, for accents. When the sweet Ionic of the Golden Age shall no longer stand unrivalled, and man shall hail "my brother!" around the globe, uttered in the real, living eloquence of the Educated Hand.

Digging a line of poetry, indeed! They shall shovel out whole *cantos* from rich loam; they—every body—

shall carve out beauty from rock ; forge ‘ beatitudes ’ in furnaces ; sow hopes in fallow fields, and reap joys in harvest.

Railway Magic.

EVERY day the whistle, ring and jar, that grand *trio* of the Age, before which old Minstrelsy is dumb, come to us over Clear Lake and through the woods, from the M. S. and N. I. R. R.—as many initials as Garrick made faces—a whole *Alphabet*—TRAIN. It’s a luxury that costs nothing—the chime of a mighty chronometer we hear—the beat of great pendulums swinging through their iron arcs, East and West, Toledo and Chicago, here and there ; ticking hours by the triplet all the day long. We set the clock by the shrill whistle of the iron boatswain, as he pipes “ all aboard ” at La Porte, and catch ourselves looking in the clear sky for a cloud, when the iron-bound thunder rolls along the rails.

There are a thousand things that every body sees, and no body thinks of ; witchery, if you will have it so ; wonders, whether you will or not. No more potent Charmer ever dwelt in “ the drowsy East,” than

DISTANCE, and especially if it has MOTION for a handmaid. Its enchantments are not merely those of a Costumer, draping mountains in azure, and "such like."

A wave of its wand, and *presto*, magical changes are wrought, that would have kept that incorrigible Sultan—if he *was* a Sultan—a "thousand and one nights" longer, with the hearing.

Did you ever creep gingerly—should there be another "*ly*" to the gingerly?—up to the deck of a Railway Car, when the train was moving, say twenty-five or thirty miles an hour? And did you look away on, beyond the Train, where the two iron bars—that noblest couplet in the great epic of the time—were welded lovingly together, without hammer, or furnace, or fire, but just beneath the wonderful, invisible fingers of Distance, till they lay there, a huge V upon the bosom of the Prairie? And how marvellously, as the Train moved on, those stubborn bars swayed round to a parallel; as lightly and noiselessly as a brace of sunbeams, flung from a mirror swinging in the wanton wind, sweep round in the blue air? And did you "mind"—not a spike wrenched from its good hold, not a tie *un*-tied, not a timber splintered? There *must* be a charm in those fingers indeed.

There now, a brood of little haycocks, escaped from their native meadow, have clustered down on the track, right before the Engine. Heedless little things! But age will bring wisdom, and one of these days, they'll be discreet haystacks, and not go gossiping upon Railroad tracks. *Will* be! Why, they are *getting* to be stacks already. From Lilliput to the other place—what a name it is to write!—is but a minute, or a minute and a half. How they expand and “get up in the world” as we near them. And they hear the Train, for see, they are wheeling in a sort of Knickerbocker waltz to the right and left, over the fence and back of the barn and beyond the orchard, and there they are, dignified and imperturbable as Haystacks *ought* to be.

And those little Bushes—a capital B, if they *are* bushes—exactly in the way, whispering and all of a flutter, dodging up here, and nestling down there, like truants in the “Entry,” during school hours. On thunders the Train, and up jump the Bushes.

Bushes indeed; TREES, forest trees, trees of a century; columns in “God’s first temples.” The trees are on the track; growing on the track! On the track indeed. By the holy rood, they are *rods*

away, just where they 'were before Railways were dreamed of.

And the worker of all this *diablerie* ! You can see the fluttering of her blue robe just there in the horizon. She has gone on to conjure again. It is DISTANCE !

“ Stop the Train ! Let us off ! Conductor, Captain, Some body, Any body ! ” There's a *village* on the Track ; born, christened, and grown since last night. There's a Meeting House and a Grave Yard and a Block of Stores in the way ! On we plunge—dispelled at the first whistle ! The Church moves gravely away, as churches *should*. The Grave Yard, with its sleeping tenantry, is whisked out of sight like a trundle-bed ; a martin-box of a cottage scuds round the corner of the Meeting House ; the row of brick stores, very much flushed, steps six paces to the rear ; the cars jar on, and Distance and Motion are in the secret.

Look behind you, and they are adjusting the machinery for the next Train. Back goes the village that had been frightened away by the whistle, and the stacks and the trees grow “ beautifully less,” and so it is every day, and all day and every where, when Distance and Motion are partners. There's a some-

thing on the track again ! It's a fly—it's a frog—it's a child—it's a *man*—six feet high—a P. M.—an M. C. On we go. We have passed him. We have left him. Five feet high—four feet high—a child—a frog—a bug—a *nothing* ! What pranks Distance can play with man and his dignities, as the cars drive rattling on. Your D. D. is *dwindled down* ; your P. M. is *past minding* ; your M. C. is *microscopic curiosity*.

Sometimes, a little village parts the foliage of an "Oak Opening," and peeps out to see the train go by. Here another skulks like a quail ; you catch a glimpse of it as you thunder past, and one cannot help thinking it will venture forth again when he is fairly out of sight. A third, a bold vixen, stands beside the track *waiting* for the cars. You whirl by a fourth—houses set down any where and very uneasy, as if just camped for the night, and glad to move "westward ho !" in the morning.

And so they work wonders—the wonderful Two—all along the way, slipping hamlets, towns, marts, on the iron string, as if they were so many beads, in a necklace for a Camanche's wearing. Why, one meets six-rail fences every day, "staked and ridered" at that, plunging along like quarter horses. Strips

of narrow yellow ribbon widen into broad acres of golden grain; scattered skeins of silk Floss are webbed into running rivers; paltry patches of green, are whole "sections" of red clover; little out-door Ovens, arched Depots of two hundred feet; the Railway itself, in the magic of Distance, seems the *double scoring* of the beautiful fields and lakes and towns along which those lines are drawn, that the Compositor may 'set them up' in CAPITALS, every one; and the Engine, a glossy black beetle creeping over the disc of the Prairies; "*the transit*" of iron, that Astronomers never foretold.

Lo! there, "the breathing thought,"
The poets sang of old,
And there "the burning word,"
No tongue had fully told,
Until the magic hand,
The bold conception wrought,
In iron and in fire it stands—
The world's embodied THOUGHT.

Lo! in the panting thunders,
Hear the echo of the Age!
Lo! in the globe's broad breast, behold
The poet's noblest page!
For in the brace of iron bars,
That weld two worlds in one,
The couplet of a nobler lay
Than bards have e'er begun!

But there *are* points in sight of the dull port of Earth, whence your pendulums and plungings would be motionless as the pulse of the dead—swing as they might, through tremendous arcs, with a Radius that would curve around the WORLD, they would be motionless still, as the caldrons that bubble amid the Maples in March—points, whence the leaves in the book of Time seem strangely displaced, and June and December—blank leaf and Vignette—flutter side by side. June and December ! A synonyme for an arc of one hundred and ninety millions of miles—an arc, that woven into a blue scarf for earth, could be flung over it from Ursa Major to the Southern Cross—could bind it in a true love-knot to the Flag-star of Even ; could flutter a fringe in the blaze of the Sun, and leave signals, aye, and *badges* beside, for all the Engineers that ever carried a “ field-book,” or sported a Theodolite.

Fourth of July.

DAY broke in thunder, this morning. There was a crashing of spars and a roaring of great guns round the horizon; and blasts of music drifting with the downy clouds; a brood of summer showers 'came off' and filled the sky; and triumphal arches were heaved up on the great 'leverage' of the Sun. It's the FOURTH OF JULY: the day they brought the iron cradle home, wherein to rock young LIBERTY; the day when the whisper breathed beneath the shadow of "King's Mountain" in the "old North State," went crashing in echoes round the entire world—

Oh! wild was that dawning! No welcome of words,
No star to foretell it—no warbling of birds—
No fading of shadows—no murmur of rills—
No flashing of pinions—no flushing of hills;
But the day broke in thunder o'er land and o'er sea,
And from cloud and from shroud, rang the song of the Free.
Oh! that song of wrought iron no bard could have made,
With its surging of banner and gleaming of blade;
With its column of cloud, and its pillar of flame,
And the clods 'neath the dead, turned *the color of fame!*

Wonderfully rare were the trinkets strown about that
cradle; the

Land of the vale, the viol, and the vine,

flung over the water a snowy lily from the gardens of FRANCE; old HOLLAND sent a plume, plucked from the bleeding breast of her own Stork; WOMAN wove a banner "without spot or wrinkle;" the FOREST uprooted an evergreen Pine for token; the MOUNTAIN chained an Eagle, right from his rocky eyrie, for emblem; HEAVEN cast down a handful of stars—a dozen and one—for the Flag that lay there; and God gave *unmuffled* drums for hearts, and right for the strong arm.

It is the Fourth of July all over the Farm: Four Blue Birds shook off their allegiance this morning; two Robins declared themselves "free and independent," of the parent nest; two colonies of bees went out from the old Hives. A battalion of red-birds paraded in full uniform; a Jay in a jaunty cap pronounced an Oration from a rocking spray in the Orchard; the winds and the woods played a grand anthem; the roses made a prayer, and "Jemmy" sang a song. The Bobolinks rang little bells all day; Ceres marshaled her corn, rustling in silks, and gay with tassels; the bearded grain was out in its gold; fireworks blazed at night over the meadow; and *isn't* it the Fourth of July all over the Farm?

It's the Fourth of July all over the World. The

Gold-digger rests his "wash-bowl on his knee," and all at once he remembers it's the Fourth of July; the orient Wanderer pauses beneath a palm, wipes his brow, and thinks, "Its the Fourth of July at home." The Mariner on his rocking deck, where pipes Cape Horn through frozen shrouds, or where his bows plough the snowy surf of northern night, bethinks him it's the Fourth of July—his trumpet is to his lip, and up main-mast and mizzen run the streamers, and from 'the fore' shakes out the Bunting; and *isn't* it the Fourth of July all over the World?

"God bless our Stars for ever!"

Thus the Angels sang sublime,
When round God's forges fluttered fast,
The sparks of starry Time!
When they fanned them with their pinions,
Till they kindled into day,
And revealed Creation's bosom,
Where the infant Eden lay.

"God bless our stars for ever!"

Thus they sang—the seers of old,
When they beckoned to the Morning,
Through the Future's misty fold;
When they waved the wand of wonder—
When they breathed the magic word,
And the pulses' golden glimmer,
Showed the waking Granite heard

"God bless our stars for ever!"

'Tis the burden of the song,
Where the sail through hollow midnight
Is flickering along;
When a ribbon of blue Heaven
Is a-gleaming through the clouds,
With a star or two upon it,
For the sailor in the shrouds!

"God bless our stars for ever!"

It is LIBERTY's refrain,
From the snows of wild Nevada
To the sounding woods of Maine;
Where the green Multnomah wanders,
Where the Alabama rests,
Where the Thunder shakes his turban
Over Alleghany's crests.

Where the mountains of New-England
Mock Atlantic's stormy main,
Where God's palm imprints the Prairie
With the type of Heaven again—
Where the mirrored morn is dawning,
Link to Link, our Lakes along,
And Sacramento's Golden Gate
Swinging open to the song—

There and there! "Our stars for ever!"

How it echoes! How it thrills!
Blot that banner? Why, they bore it
When no sunset bathed the hills.
Now over BUNKER see it billow,
Now at BENNINGTON it waves,
TICONDEROGA swells beneath,
And SARATOGA's graves!

Oh! long ago at LEXINGTON,
And above those minute-men,
The "Old Thirteen" were blazing bright—
There were *only* thirteen then!
God's own stars are gleaming through it—
Stars not woven in its thread;
Unfurl it, and that flag will glitter
With the Heaven overhead.

Oh! it waved above the Pilgrims,
On the pinions of the prayer;
Oh! it billowed o'er the battle,
On the surges of the air;
Oh! the stars have risen in it,
Till the Eagle waits the Sun,
And FREEDOM from her mountain watch
Has counted "Thirty-one."

When the weary Years are halting,
In the mighty march of Time,
And no *New* ones throned the threshold
Of its corridors sublime;
When the clarion call, "close up!"
Rings along the line no more,
Then adieu, thou blessed Banner,
Then adieu, and not before!

“It Rains.”

“ONE day with another, they are pretty much alike.” It’s a—*no such thing*, if every body a’most *does* say it. This Every-body’s a *No-body*, and has just such an idea of days, as Wordsworth’s man had of Primroses :

“A Primrose by the river’s brim,
A yellow Primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.”

So a day to this “Every-body,” is something *hót* or dry, or wet or cold, or something *else*, but “nothing more.”

Of all days, give me rainy ones for memory and meditation. They some how soften the mental surface, trampled and trodden down by many-footed interest, and let the buried germs of the past, and the half-forgotten, up through the parched and indurated soil—germs bursting into the beauty of the days that are no more—flowers of the heart, that though it be a rock, cling around its clefts, and deck its rude and roughened breast, with a brighter “order” than ever glittered on the bosom of bravery.

If the dear departed ever appear to us, it is when

the sky is overcast, dimly through the mist of rain and tears.

If the wondrous mirage of the mind ever brings to view the shores of the distant past, it is when the cloud is overhead ; just as we sometimes see the sunshine on the swelling hills abroad, while the veil of rain and shadow envelopes us where we stand.

If the footfalls of those who have gone before,

“To that unseen and silent shore,”

are ever heard by the listening heart, it is when they are so blended with the pattering of the rain, we cannot tell one from the other.

The Singer of the Welsh Mountains makes the Waldenses bless God “for the strength of the hills,” and why may not we, in humble prose, bid the beatitude of Memory rest upon the Rain ? The Rain that brightens the past and revives its withered and withering flowers.

But alas ! for it, the warmest, softest, sweetest Rain—e'en the Rain that Mercy is likened to—cannot restore to life those who have obeyed the hallowing touch of time, and are “dust to dust.”

Beaumont and Fletcher told it truly when they bade the mourner,

‘ Weep no more, lady, weep no more,
Thy sorrow is in vain ;
For violets pluck’d, the sweetest showers
Will ne’er make grow again.”

The other day we were favored with a well-behaved rain, blest with an abundance of gentleness, and a disposition sweet as June.

It was none of your dashing, roaring sort of rains, that strangle the gutters, splash against the windows, and take one’s breath away with whole pailsfull of water at once.

It was none of your cold, sleety, freezing rains, that come down point first, like an avalanche of cambric needles ; nor yet, a blustering, whirling shower that sweeps up before you in sheets, with the roll of thunder between, that makes you think of banners in a battle. Neither was it one of those old-fashioned “ steady ” rains, that begin to get ready in the morning, with the wind “ a swooning over hollow grounds,” mist all the forenoon, drip, drip, all the afternoon, and set in to a regular rattling, pouring rain, that rains you to sleep—that you hear when away in the middle of your dream—that rains when you wake up—that *keeps* raining, till you begin to think of old Covenants, and bless yourself, as you turn over, that the

seal of the rainbow has not faded from the dark scroll of the storm.

No, it was none of these, but just a whole brood of showerettes—little showers—that came one after another, out of the clouds, every other one a *sunshine*, as if to see how Earth would be pleased with them.

Just the rain that sets the flowers in the garden to dancing and courtseying and nodding—just the rain to render the poet's line no fancy,

“Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.”

IT RAINS! But don't imagine for a minute that it always does the same thing when it rains. As emphatic little girls say, under their breath, 'it n'ever, n'ever does.' There's the rain *impromptu*, the rain progressive, the rain premeditated, and the rain with a “to be continued,” the oblique, the perpendicular, the driving, the dripping, and the sheet rain; and no body can tell how many more if he tries.

There's your dull, drizzling, dreamy rain, that dampens the day and the spirits, and makes one remember old sunsets, old “flames,” and old friends; and there's your right bright, merry living shower, that comes dancing down in sunshine, or moon-

shine, or any time, all the same. Here is one that comes *creeping* along stealthily, first a haze, then a mist, then a wet blanket, then one drop, then two, and "so on," as Japhet's Apothecary—*was* it Japhet's?—was always saying. But *here's* one—a clear sky a moment ago, but all at once a cloud—a cloud with an *Engine* in it; and all at once a shower, that drops exactly down; then intermits, then down again; and the cloud, instead of hanging about like a smuggler, goes right on, and there it is, doing the same by the Corn, that it did, a minute ago, by the Clover. That's a "Summer Cloud;" that's what Shakspeare meant, I guess, by the "o'ercoming" cloud he told of. At all events, the interpretation makes it mean *something*, which is more than can be said of all expositions, either of Shakspeare or Isaiah. Summer Clouds are busy creatures. Autumn Clouds are lazy and sullen; while those of Winter go hurrying about, ragged as beggars, but your June-born cloud is "no such person." *It's* rounded and downy; like Charity; and shifts its apparel every five minutes all day long. It "lets go" a clearly defined shadow over grain, forest, or meadow, but it "drags anchor," and on it goes with its shadow, over the tops of the corn, and the flukes do not rumple a

tassel! Show me any but a Summer Cloud, that trails its Daguerreotype about, after that fashion.

But the grandest of *all* rains is that with Scenic and Orchestral accompaniments; and the very sort we were having hereabouts, when I wrote, "it rains." Two hours ago, the sky was as blue and as clear as a Robin's egg. An hour and a half ago, three Macbeth-ish "thunder-heads" lay lurking sullenly in the North-west, behind the woods, and grimly growled at the Sunshine they meant to "put out." There they lay, three Golden Fleeces, worthy a trio of Jasons; for the Sun was doing what he could, to burnish up their dingy and brazen volumes, till they looked the gorgeous Armorial Bearings of the Storm they were. A moment since, *couchant*, now *rampant*, they have rolled up almost to the Zenith, and behind them, without rent or wrinkle, trails the dark robe of the Storm. A train, it is shaken out over the trees; a sail, it curves from Heaven to Earth; men-of-war, the dark hulls loom up in the offing. There's a jarring of machinery above, as stately and steadily they sweep up in the very teeth of the wind. There's a flashing of carabines athwart their dim decks. There are red lights like battle-lanterns swinging aloft. The drums beat grummer and grummer "to quarters."

They are rounding to; they are lying broadside to broadside; they have opened ports! One blast from a Bugle! The great shotted guns of the gust war at each other from deck to deck. The roll of the rain on roof and tree rattles bravely on, the while, and at last the battle is ended. The cloudy craft wear away, all sails set, and what pearly and purple signals they show in the setting sun!

A great Rainbow is bent around the world; the half of the signet-ring of the Almighty, the great Admiral of the Fleet, in token of peace and amity 'twixt Heaven and Earth.

The illusion is melting away. That Bridge of Seven is breaking. The violet has grown dim, the indigo has gone, the blue has faded, the green is gray, the yellow is tarnished, but the red rim holds together still. Dim and dimmer; *it* is gone, and the woods are all splashed with the shattered Bow. Do you remember, years and years ago, how you looked and looked for the fragments? Haven't you done it within a month? Nay, never deny it; *every body* has, and so it's a family secret;—ADAM'S Family—first name not recollected—and so, who cares who knows it?

“M o v e m e n t s .”

THERE *are* movements—believe it—not due to Locomotives, not made by ‘fast horses,’ not occurring in ‘Markets,’ nor noted by Astronomers, nor caught by Dancers. Movements full of grace and beauty; movements full of wonder and mystery; Voyagers without log-books, Travellers without diaries; movements occurring every day, every where, in the quietest nooks you can think of; even here on the Farm, carved out of the woods with an axe, sculptured with a plough, and lettered with a spade.

PINE LAKE, you know, is just out of sight of the Farm, but wouldn’t be, if Summer did not lay out “ever so much” in fringe, about and about it, as if green fringe were every thing, and to be seen, nothing ! Well, Pine Lake is gemmed with wee bits of *Erins*—an Archipelago of LILY leaves riding at anchor; whereon creep *petite* snakes, of species to me unknown, that wind themselves up like watch-springs, and sun themselves to sleep. Occasionally, a silly tobacco-box of a Turtle assays to make a landing, but

there's a *leaf*-quake ; up tips the Emerald Isle, and down tumbles his turtle-ship.

Like white chalices held up by unseen hands, thousands of lilies just part the water, gently lifted on every wave, silently withdrawn as it subsides. Beautiful thoughts they are, rocked on the swells of a pure bosom. In storm and calm, by sunlight and starlight, always there, no tri-linked cable clanks beneath, but fragile stems sway softly in the water ; while brave old Oaks, moored by an hundred roots to solid land, are torn from their fastenings, and flung crashing to earth !

Lilies there are, pearling the billows of our troublous humanity, that thus ride out all its storms, unrent and spotless—Lilies still, till, in the last cold baptism of death, they are buried “out of our sight.” They leave not a leaf ; they make not a sign ; the waters are crystal as before, and next year there are lilies again.

“So dies in human hearts the thought of death.”

The sweetest offering of humanity to Heaven is beauty : the beauty of form and fame. Lilies alike of the field and the flood ! SOLOMON, “in all his glory,” could not rival them, and the utterances of

life's MASTER, upon the Mount, have vested them both with a beauty immortal as the Spring.

Hard by the cellar-door, a POTATO had fallen, no body knows when. Potatoes were "scarce and in demand;" potatoes were "like angels' visits;" in fact, potatoes were *potatoes*; but amid the darkness and damp, the individual tuber in question was not noticed. So, and if not "so," then *any* how, it determined to do something for itself, and, potato as it was, *be* something. So it sent out a Vine that crept here and there without a light—poor thing!—looking very pale indeed, in the darkness.

By and by, instead of rambling about like a truant, it set off all at once, and away it went along the damp, earthen floor; and what was its errand, and had it, in very deed, a mission? A stray beam or two of sunlight from the upper air had been in the habit, at a certain hour, of venturing down the cellar stairs, and struggling with the dim, and falling upon the floor.

And the VINE, like a mariner, was making for 'the light' that God had kindled there in the dark! Joy go with thee, pale Vine, on thy journey. Engineers cannot direct thy route; Contractors cannot build a way for thee. With a passport from the hum-

blest deputy of the Universal Life, thou canst go around the world alone !

On it went, and yesterday it reached its destination, and with a raveled leaf of lightest green, it lies there beneath the sunbeam, the tint of a freer, fuller life in every fibre.

Like some low-born maiden in the "Morning Land," where dwell the worshippers of the Sun, this Vine has crept night after night, without a day between, to the place it had heard of afar off, where the SHAH for a while held audience. Arrived, it unfolds its gift, though 'tis of the humblest, and lying upon the earth, timidly lifts the border of his gorgeous robe, and covers its bended head, as if it had faltered, "*I too am thy subject. Be thou my protector, as thou art my king.*" So said the Vine to the great Prince of Morning. But he withdrew his robe, and went on in his chariot. He flushed the red Missouri with a deeper glow ; and he gilded again the sands of the Sacramento ; and he drove on, like Neptune, over the calm Pacific ; and the porcelain towers of China were a-blaze at his coming. He tarried among the palms, and he pressed the lips of the daughters of Circassia, and he kindled the cold bosoms of the beauties of the North, and he lingered in dalliance with the ivory

fingered women of Europe ; and he *did* not *forget* the Vine, that waited for him the while in the cellar of the old homestead. But this morning, the chariot and horses of Phœbus waited without, while he descended the damp and slippery steps, and left a smile for the Vine that will last it all day and all night, and until he comes again in his glory.

“Movements” indeed ! Why, the Farm is full of them. The leaves of the SILVER POPLAR, in breaths of air the faintest, go all day like little French clocks, with their “green and silver—silver-green ; green and silver—silver-green,” while the tall Elm swings slowly in the upper air, like the pendulums of old narrow-waisted, moon-faced clocks, wound up with a *string*, that used to “tick behind the door,” from gray Grandam’s infancy, to the shrill bell of the latest hour that sailed from the port of Time.

The STRAWBERRY is a great rover—in fact, the “RED ROVER” of the vegetable kingdom. It minds no more about fences than an English Hunter ; never stops for bars or gates, but wanders about all over the Farm as it wills ; it never tells where it will be to-morrow or next year, never leaves a line, and one is never sure he will have it Thursday because he possessed it Wednesday. As much a migratory creature

is the Strawberry as the BIRD, that, all day long, fans the cold, thin atmosphere, from Southern Winter into Northern Spring—from Lake to Lagoon, from Champlain to the Chesapeake. A great Pendulum is that Bird too, swinging twice a year over the Farm, with the flowers or the frosts glittering beneath and behind it.

The WHEAT, that has been waving, and nodding, and rustling, for many a day, they are rocking to sleep in cradles of fingers, and to-night will conclude the Lullaby of the Harvest. And the Wheat on its way down, meets the CORN and the GRASS going up, and the SILK rising; and the BEES, murmuring along to the woods and the clover, meet the Cows coming home to the milking, and the Robins *en route* for the cherries; the pears and the apples are coming on; the setting Bantams and Cochin Chinas are coming off; the milk is running over the pails; the share is running under the fallow; the Hops running round and round.

The ROSES, red, white, and variegated, have been going down, *by the leaf*, one after another, until now “the last rose of summer” is “left blooming alone.” Who would not grieve more to have them die, were not Roses among the few things of earth that are fra-

grant when dead? “Brindle,” and “Red,” and “old Mooly” have come in; the Honeysuckle and the Lilies have come out; and so it goes, and so they *all* go.

Domesticated, and always in sight of the house, are trees of about five-and-twenty different characters, colors, and capabilities; and queerly do they act—some of them—in the down-coming rain, as it twinkles on the little buds, clatters on the Plantains, patters on the Lilac bushes, flutters on the Peaches. The Butternut just quivers and quakes; the Lilac dodges this way and that, and the Roses fairly dance up and down. The Peaches, all of a flutter, seem just ready to fly; the chuckle-headed Apple-trees keep nodding like “silent members;” the Mulberry swings lazily to and fro, as if it didn’t mind it much; while the heaped-up Grape Vine shakes itself like a thorough-bred Newfoundland, and the Oak just stands straight in the shower, and takes it as Oaks *should*. Down below, the White Clover twinkles, twinkles, like very dim stars very far off, and the little Mosses do nothing but look as green as they can. The Wheat bows and jostles, and turns this way and that, and breaks its neck—some of it—and betrays symptoms of a regular *stampede*, while the knightly Corn keeps

“saluting” the shower with its broad, green blades : and so they “go through the motions” in all weathers ; and so, as Market Reporters have it, “ we have movements to note.”

A tree down in the corner—know it well enough “ by sight”—stands shivering from morning till night ; it is big enough to be braver ; a pert little Quince by the south window is for ever “ a nod, nod, nodding,” no matter what is said, or who says it ; while a Sweet Brier, that has snuggled up to the north wall, amuses itself with ‘Spiritual Rappings’ upon the window-sill ; a Maple, a little way off, rolls up in the wind its great billows of green, and looks, sometimes, as if it would toss itself into Heaven, and its glorious verdure be blent with the Blue of the Blest.

A great Tree, its one column rising solemnly out of the earth, and its branches flung up into the sky, is a noble piece of architecture, and none but God can build it. Such a tree stands on the other side of the road, and so, as I have said, do its great swells of foliage roll up in the blast. And when, sometimes, Noon, like a worn warrior in armor of gold, lies breathless upon the plain, there is a rustle still, a song and a cool breath still, amid its mighty recesses of shade. When they “lay the axe at its root,” and

it shivers to its green coronal with the strokes, and it comes down with the rushing of a great banner, and the roaring of a great gun, one would almost think the blue air must retain the *form* that had filled it so beautifully and long; that its semblance in aerial outline should not pass for ever away. But when I think it is not so,

——“a feeling of sadness comes o’er me,
That my soul cannot resist;

“A feeling of sadness and longing
That is not akin to pain,
But resembles sorrow only
As the mist resembles the rain.”

D e n d o m .

DON’T be alarmed, unless you are a mouse, or a chicken, or some such tit-bit. I’ve turned OWL;—Minerva’s bird—I’ve made a descent upon the Hen-roost; I’ve pounced upon an idea, such as it is; an idea in feathers.

A Hen is a foolish thing—hasn’t a grain of sense, for *that’s* a grain not found in gizzards. Her head is pierced exactly through the middle for a couple of

eyes, and a small head at that, so there is no *room* for sense. As for the eyes, they must be excellent optical instruments, for she can discover “a hawk” where we couldn’t distinguish it from a “handsaw;” but then they have about the expression of a brace of brass buttons at a shilling a gross. There isn’t much poetry about Hens; there isn’t much romance in Hendom. Hens are speckled, grizzled, and gray; white, copper-colored, and blue—all blue in “the Jerseys;” there are the old-fashioned hens and the Bantams; those *heavenly* hens, the Shanghais and Cochin Chinas; hens with no tails, short tails, and pretty much all tails; hens in feathered pantaloons—whew! and June too!—and hens with Camwood-colored pantalettes—the very kind for the table; hens with Hussar-caps; hens with huge back-combs, like our Grandmothers; hens with very delicate side-combs, like our Sweethearts.

The grand “Movement” in feminine humanity is by no means endemic, inasmuch as ‘strong-minded’ hens are far from being anomalies now-a-days. They quarrel, and crow, and act, as near as possible, like veritable Chanticleers; shouldn’t be surprised to see a Bantam out in Bloomer any morning; some of them wear spurs already. Progressive Hens! *Apropos*

of spurs ; I have an interest in, that is, am part owner of—sole estate, real and personal—a magnificent Cochin China Cock. He is not knighted yet ; he wants the spurs ; but he'll make a sensation when he gets them, and sign himself " F. M."—Field-Marshal the Cochin China, with as good a grace, and as much of it withal, as the " Iron Duke." He has a voice already that would be *music* to THOR, the Saxon Thunderer ; and he crows, but " not an *ultra*" crow ; in fact, a " judicious, discriminating" crow, when there are no veteran rivals of the old school in the field. Never mind ; he is rehearsing for " sharp practice" one of those days.

Socrates—we read—requested, among the last things, that a Cock might be sacrificed to Esculapius—" confirmation strong" that it was no Cochin China ; else, *what* a sacrifice !

Hens are like *folks* ; look, act, and talk like folks—that is, a great many folks—that you and I know. There's one now, with precisely two feathers in her tail, by actual inventory ; and the two stick directly up, like a couple of oars in a fishing smack. She's a fussy little body, and goes clucking around with one chicken about the size of a wren, quite unconscious of the figure she cuts, and the ridicule she provokes,

wherever she goes. Who doesn't know some body as like her "as two peas?" She's every where, in every thing; has "a word in season," and *out*, and for that matter the 'outs' have it. Nothing going on, that she isn't there, and hasn't something to say, with her short steps but a great many of them. Only glance at that wonderful chicken of hers, and she's all of a clutter; ruffles her feathers, and looks—so *she* thinks—very formidable. She is too tough to eat, or she would have been *guillotined* long ago.

That gray individual is older than "MACK," and *he's* a dozen; the Meg Merrilies of the Roost. Quite a Malte Brun is she in her way, for what she does not know about the Geography of Corn-cribs, Cornfields, Cherry trees, Melon patches, and rare picking generally, isn't *worth* knowing. Posted in all that pertains to nestling, scratching, and roosting places, she unites in her venerable self the Mrs. Partington and the Paul Pry of Hendom. Not a brood of chickens does some more favored sister lead triumphantly off, but she sets up an apology for a cluck, spreads her tail, puts on an extra frill, and, looking as matronly as possible—who would think it?—lays claim to half the chickens—the only thing, by the by, she *can* lay. Having outlived her youthful weaknesses, she has

utterly forgotten she ever was a pullet, and is very severe upon every little indiscretion among the poultry. Her age is her protection, and she makes the most of her privilege, grows garrulous precisely as she grows foolish, and is as captious and consequential as an old Dowager.

Longer Biographies of "bipeds without feathers," have been manufactured out of less material than the adventures of this venerable PARTLET would supply. In her youth, an *accident*, or, to be briefer, an *axe*, deprived her of her toes; and then, just to think of it! what perils by club and stone, and mop and broom, she has encountered; what imminent danger from hungry hawks she has escaped; what weasels have poached her innocent eggs! Nearly abducted by Reynard; quite looked out of countenance by an Owl; half frozen "that cold winter;" almost drowned in the wash-tub; and what a family she has reared in her day, that were all "well to do," until they were *well done*. What themes for pathos and patriotism; what opportunities for ode and episode would these incidents furnish!

It rains this morning, and half a score of cocks in red and yellow uniform, stand in the corners of the fences, under the wagon, or the lee of an old plough,

heads drawn into feather mufflers, and looking, with their drenched and drooping plumes, like Militia Captains on parade day, when Barometers and water are reported "falling." There is not a crow of defiance, or triumph, or complacence; not a call—you have heard it, and I cannot describe it, unless it is like a laugh in a muff—to the 'women folks,' at the discovery of some rare delicacy, real or imaginary, in the freshly-raked earth; imaginary, for it must be confessed they are "gay deceivers," some of them, and call very affectionately, when they find no corn.

Observation, both of Cocks and Capitalists, enables me to say, that any "Rooster," having from three pecks to one and a half bushels of some current grain at command, can come into this neighborhood, and among eighty or so (counting chickens) of the feathered race, be THE courted, caressed, and clucked about, of the whole roost; *but*—an awkward invention is 'but,' for an awkward necessity—*let him take care of his corn.*

Small lawyers very Johnsonian; red-visaged Bonifaces very Boswellian; officers of the Army all Brigadiers; "Martinets" of the Navy very peremptory; little Quakeresses very modest; mothers very bustling, and gossips very busy—*all* are represented among

that parti-colored, cackling, clucking, crowing rowd of Locomotive MILLS for the grinding of all sorts of produce, and called "for short" HENS.

These "small deer" are vocal but not musical, unless one has an ear for sawing and filing. Their language is too rich in consonants—too decidedly Saxon; and because, I suppose, no William the Conqueror ever broke shell, and *thus* made his *debut* into breathdom, it is without the softening accents of the Norman-French. Harsh as it is, however, no one can deny to it expressiveness, and, sometimes, eloquence: the great cry when an egg is laid is as good as an announcement in the *London Times*, thus: "MRS. SPECKLED, of an EGG." The alarm, when a wing somewhat too broad sweeps over the Farm-Yard, is as significant as the old Saxon Tocsin. The call of something "found," is quite as intelligible as the Town Crier with his bell. The defiant voice of the Cock is a challenge in honest vernacular, and the triumphant crow is a "*hurrah*" in plain English. The Mother's incessant 'cluck, clucking,' with her family, is veritable "baby-talk," while her tones, gathering the callow wanderers together, are as full of love as an old Ballad. And the notes of the *chickens*! There is not a rural sound softer and

sweeter than the home-note of the little creatures, when nestled at night beneath the Mother's brooding wing. Were it translated into the language of "Paradise Lost"—that subdued "yeep, eep, eep"—it would be, beyond a doubt, the word defined by some Webster yet unborn, "perfect happiness at home, and home once more !"

Chicken Pie.

THE transition from chickens on the perch to chickens in the pie, seems more natural and easy according to Whateley and Newman than it is according to Poultry. I abominate Chicken-pies as edibles, but, be assured, from no "fellow feeling." I love to see them, to think of them, but not to eat them. I would as soon make a meal of reminiscences, or call for a Metaphor, "rare done," at dinner. They are suggestive ; they are melancholy—Chicken-pies are ; they bring to mind days that went down long ago at home ; the capacious and burnished tin pan, wherein "mother"—your mother and mine—used to bake them aforetime ; the old family table, round

which we five, and no more, used to gather, Christmas Days and Thanksgivings; when to hold the lantern at night, while some body robbed the hen-roost, was an era; when we used to run away before they were beheaded, because we couldn't 'bear to see it;' when we just wanted to *hold* one a minute, 'to see how it would seem;' when a wing was a treasure, and we 'played' it was a bird, and '*poored*' it, and offered it crumbs of bread every day, and wrapped it up in an apron, and hid it in the trundle-bed; when we—you and I—grasped the '*wish-bone*' and wished, and both pulled, and both held a fragment; but yours was the larger, so you *had* your wish, as they all told us. Don't you remember? Can't you see it all? Ah! there's more beneath that swelling crust than every body dreams of, and the chickens are a small item indeed.

That mnemonic pie "minds" me, too, of the days when to find a Hen's nest was to have an ecstasy; the more eggs, the more ecstasy. Many a man—perhaps *you* have—has found name and fame since then, and it never quickened a pulse! How the chip hat was doffed, preparatory to "the removal of the deposits," and the eggs transferred thereto; and no Roman, returning from flushed fields

of conquest, felt half so grand as you and I, when we counted the treasures, one by one, into Mother's checked apron, and had a vision of a little pie a-piece, baked upon 'our scalloped tins.'

Sometimes, after a driving rain, you remember, we used to find a downy chick, drenched with water, in *articulo mortis*. The little handled basket, stained with strawberries summers before, was nicely lined with cotton-wool, and the gasping helplessness nestled therein, and the basket, with its precious contents, covered with a cloth, was set in a corner near the kitchen fire, to keep it warm. And what times we had, wetting up meal, and feeding, and watching, and 'tending! How many times we peeped under the cloth, just to see, as we said, 'how it is now.' Fierce altercation—sorry to say it—about the ownership of the tenant in the basket, would arise, and the titles tried by the usual test of who saw it first, who got to it first, who put it in the basket, whose hen laid the egg, or whose hen hatched it; and maybe, the while, the chicken would be dying. The right of possession occurs simultaneously to both; a plunge is made for the basket; the cloth falls off in the *mêlée*, and the chicken lies there, among the white wool—*dead!* War is turned to weeping. I made a shingle

coffin ; you dug a grave. The chicken was borne out beneath the apple-tree, and we buried it there, and sang, as well as we could,

“Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound.”

That done, you remember one of us wrote upon the fragment of a slate, ‘SACRED to the memory of’——and *there* was a difficulty ; it had no *name*. But this was disposed of, and we wrote on—‘a little BIDDY, drowned to death, July 10th, 18—’—I’ve forgotten the year ; and then drew over the top, a distant resemblance of a weeping willow, very drooping and sad, and set it up at the head of the grave. That afternoon there was a shower, and at night, when we went out to see the little grave again, the inscription was gone ; the drops of rain had washed it all away ! Strange, we never thought of it then, but we have since : slate, marble, or brass ; pencil, graver, or gilding, it is all the same. The world weeps away its griefs, and with those griefs, the memory of the wept.

Since then, we have both stood by *other* graves, times too many, doubtless with deeper, but never with *truer* sorrowing, than when, beneath the old apple-tree, we paid our childish tribute to the dead NESTLING.

Happiness "at Cost."

THIS morning, a wagon, laden with wheat, went by, going to town ; nothing strange in *that*, certainly. And a man driving the team, and a woman perched on the load beside him, and a child throned in the woman's lap ; nothing strange in that, either. And it required no particular shrewdness to determine that the woman was the property—"personal," of course—of the man, and that the black-eyed, round-faced child was the property of both of them.

So much I saw ; so much, I suppose, every body saw, who looked. It is a fair inference that the wife was going in to help her husband 'trade out' a portion of the proceeds of the wheat, the product of so much labor and so many sunshines and rains.

The pair were somewhere this side—a fine point of observation, *isn't* it ?—this side of forty, and it is presumptive, if blessed like their neighbors, they left two or three children at home, 'to keep house' while they came to town—perhaps two girls and a boy, or, as it is immaterial to us, two boys and a girl.

Well, I followed the pair, in thought, until the

wheat was sold, the money paid, and then for the trade. The baby was shifted from shoulder to shoulder, or set down upon the floor, to run off into mischief like a sparkling globule of quicksilver on a marble table, while calicoes were priced, sugar and tea tasted, and plates “rung.” The good wife looks askance at a large mirror that would be just the thing for the best room, and the roll of carpeting of most becoming pattern; but it won’t do; they must wait till next year. Ah! there is music in those next years that *Orchestras* cannot make!

And so they look, and price, and purchase the winter supplies, the husband the while eying the little roll of bank-notes, “growing small by degrees and beautifully less.” Then comes an ‘aside’ conference, particularly confidential. She takes him affectionately by the button, and looks up in his face—she has fine eyes by the by—with an expression eloquent of “do, now; it will please them so.” And what do you suppose they talk of? Toys for the children; John wanted a drum, and Jane a doll, and Jenny a little book all pictures, “just like Susan so-and-so’s.” The father *looks* “nonsense;” but he feels in his pocket for the required silver, and the mother, having gained the point, hastens away, baby and all, for the

toys. There acts the mother—she had half promised, not all, that she would bring them something, and she is happy all the way home, not for the bargains she made, but for the pleasant surprises in those three brown parcels. And you ought to have been there, when they got home ; when the drum, and the doll, and the book were produced—and thumped, and cradled, and thumbed—*wasn't* it a great house !

Happiness is *so* cheap, what a wonder there is not more of it in the world !

Aerial Rehearsal.

LAST night, the moon, with a new coat of silver, rode high in the west, while in the north and north-east, pure, pearly white overlaid the blue—then deepened to an orange—then turned to a crimson, till it looked like the pillar of fire in the wilderness, or a Daguerreotype of sunset.

Anon it changed ; the crimson was pink ; the blue, a blush ; and the pearl, a delicate green.

What they were doing up aloft, is more than I know ; whether rehearsing sunset or sunrise, ' shifting

scenes' for the never-before-performed drama of 'Tomorrow,' or spreading out rainbows on the upper decks to dry, is to me a mystery.

Now and then, white, silvery-looking spars were lifted up from the northern horizon, and converged in the zenith ; and it occurred to me, that, may be, they were repairing this great blue tent we live under, and that I saw the bare spars and the red linings of the curtains that were thrown up, to keep them out of the way of the aerial craftsmen.

And then again, as it crimsoned, and pearled, and clouded so exquisitely, I fancied it might be Heaven's grand pattern for sea-shells to tint by, discovered at last.

And once more, ere I had quite made up my mind on this conjecture, such a beam, nay, *cloud* of red light streamed out into the night, and over the stars, one would be sure it must come from Heaven's painted window, and that some body—perhaps some body we once knew and loved, and love still—was passing to and fro, giving us, without the walls, a glimpse or two of the glory within.

As I kept looking, I kept fancying, and who knew that it might not be the evening of some forgotten and long-past yesterday, thus ' revisiting the glimpses

of the moon'—one that you and I loved, and have sighed for, more than we would care to tell, and would give a dozen to-morrows to see again.

As I looked, it changed, and the whole heaven from far below the Dipper to the Zenith, was a *flutter*. Through the silver lace-work shone the stars, and the blue, and the galaxy itself. What *could* it be, but the dim scarfs of the loved and lost, thus waved in token of remembrance to the earth beneath? And why not? How beautiful and how calm lay that earth beneath the great Argus sky! The eyes of hundreds were turned towards Heaven, that during the broad and glaring day forget there *is* a Heaven, and a treasure in it. They remembered it then, and were remembered in turn. Ah! if our fancies were only *half* true!

The books call it Aurora Borealis—what do we care for the books?—and the philosophers declare it is electrical in its origin; a fig for the philosophers! The books of memory and the human heart were printed and collated before that conceited old German they tell of, ever cut a type; and as for philosophy, there is more wisdom in a thought thus tinted with a ray shining through last night from yesterday, than

Seneca, or any body this side of Solomon, ever thought of.

But while I gazed and mused, the vision vanished, the window was curtained, the rehearsal over, the sea-shells taught their lesson, the tent 'as good as new,' the last scene shifted, and the old yesterday faded out.

Domestic Enchantment.

SOMETHING very mysterious over to CHARLES', yesterday. All the children belonging to all the neighbors were cautioned not to 'come a-near,' and RUSH went dashing off to town, like a king's courier, and there was much talk among the feminines, that grew beautifully inaudible at my approach.

Whatever it was, or would be, it created a strange commotion in all the region round about. At our house, bureau-drawers tumbled out their treasures of flannels and linens; closets and upper shelves were ransacked for saffron and catnip; time-tinted papers of pink and senna were disturbed, amid barbless fish-hooks, broken awls, and rusty gimlets.

What could it all mean ? Three women in secret conclave, stood sentry at the kitchen-door. Why did they look at me ? What had *I* to do with it, or them, or any thing ?

An exodus was effected ; once in the fields, I breathed freer, and who wonders ?

Mercy on the house that never had a baby in it ! Don't you remember when you were 'little,' how you sighed for a playfellow, and how, some bright morning, they took you mysteriously and smilingly by the hand, and led you into a darkened room, with a gleam of white drapery in it ; and how you trembled in your little shoes as you stood there, every thing was so dim, and solemn, and whispered ; and how Aunt Green, or Brown, or some body, took out, exactly from the midst of the drapery, a nice little bundle, bordered about with ribbon, and you discovered a face of the littlest, and eyes of the bluest, and fingers of the tiniest, and you were enjoined to kiss it, and love it, and 'be good' to it, for ever and ever ? And you asked all in a breath, whence it came, and when it came, and who brought it, and whose it was, and were told, 'from Heaven—last night—an Angel—yours !' How you wished you had been awake, to see that beautiful Angel with her long white wings ! And did she go

‘right away,’ and would she come again and bring another ?

Perhaps they averred that the precious little creature was found, like a young quail, hidden beneath some marvellous leaf. Many a time, whether you will own it or not, now you have grown old and wise, you have peeped beneath the plantains and the burdocks, in the secret hope of finding another little Moses, ready to smile, that you might have all to yourself. Many a time, whether you will own it or not, you watched some parting in the summer cloud, and thought you saw a wing and an angel ; and then, it *wasn't* a wing, but a little cherub coming all alone, sailing on a little cloud all crimson and gold ; and then, it was just a face that looked through, and was withdrawn ; and then, you grew weary with watching, and your eyes ached with gazing, and you fell asleep under the tree, and dreamed it was all true and more ! What wouldn't you give for one such dream now ?

Just heard from CHARLES'. Enchantment, necromancy, sorcery, and incantation are all true—never doubt it ! His house is haunted ! A “charmer” has come into that quiet family, and the wonders she

works, would put Persians and East Indians to their trumps.

The first thing she did was to give the wheel of time a tremendous whirl forward, and throw a respectable couple, if not exactly into "kingdom come," at least into the generation on before, and transform them into grandfather and grandmother in a twinkling; turn innocent young women into aunts, and roistering boys into uncles, before they knew it, and cap the climax, by making a young pair, who fancied, a minute ago, they had their fortunes to make, independent for life. And all this time, and doing all this, she never said a word!

But this Charmer wrought other wonders. She made an error of *one* in the tables of a Census-taker, miles away, and puzzled him sadly; she prolonged a piece of delicate flannel then going through the loom, just three yards; gave the spool of the ribbon-weaver a dozen turns more than was intended; kept the weary lace-maker, in spite of herself, full two hours longer at her task, she wondering, the while, why she tarried at her toil. And so she went on with her witchery, further than I have time to think or patience to tell, and yet—people profess to believe that the days of enchantment have passed away!

‘The name of this Charmer?’ inquires some body, and there he has me at fault. She is nameless, like the clouds and the flowers. She came unannounced. She bore no letters of introduction. She presented no card; and indeed, ‘saving and excepting’ the wonders she works, she is an emphatic no body. Strange world, isn’t it? Strange visitors enter it, don’t there?

An Unscientific Chat about Music.

THERE is, as every body knows, a trumpet-shaped little instrument, delighting in the barbarous name of Stethoscope, made at some small expense of wood, ivory, and skill, wherewith the surgeon plays eaves-dropper to the clink of the machinery of life; and there’s a thought in it alike for the preacher and the poet. It is sublime, indeed, to bring one’s ear close to the heart’s red brink, and list the tinkling of the crimson tide; but there is something more sublime than this. Beneath that wave incarnadine, in *every* heart, lie pebbly thoughts in rhyme, and gems “of purest ray,” beyond the ken of surgeon, and beyond his skill—the emotion half uttered in a sigh, the hope

half written in a smile, the grief betokened in a tear.

Now that sublimer something is—POETRY. “!?”
—Yes, most Incredulous, Poetry—for what is it, after all, but the stethoscope of the soul, whereby we hear the music of a healthful heart, and the footfall of lofty thought in the hall of the spirit? What is it but the thought itself, warm and living, *throbbed* out by one heart, only to find lodgment in another? And what is MUSIC, but the melodious wing that wafts and warms it on its mission round the world—that will not let it droop—that will not let it die?

“Auld Lang Syne”—here it is, glittering with the dews of its native heather—sung last night in a hovel, sung this morning in a hall. “When shall we meet again?” Within one little year how many lips have asked—how many knells have answered it! Where pipes Cape Horn through frozen shrouds, the mariner hums “Sweet Home,” to-night; where hearths are desolate and cold, they sing “Sweet Home,” in *Heaven*. With how many blended hearts, from Plymouth to the Prairie, “Dundee’s wild warbling measures rose” last Sabbath morn—the strain the Covenanters sang—the tune that lingers yet along the banks of murmuring Ayr! The “Star Spangled

Banner" strong voices hymn on deck and desert, in bivouac and battle, where beats a heart beneath Columbia's flag. The "Exile of Erin" will sing the mournful strain, while grates his pilgrim bark upon a foreign shore ; they'll chant "Marseilles," and sound the simple "Ranz des Vaches," till Revolutions are no more, and Alpine altars cease to kindle in the evening beam. "Those evening bells," and "Sweet Afton," and all that long array of sweet and simple melodies that linger round the heart, like childhood's dreams of heaven—whence came their breath of immortality, if not from Music, the pinion of the Song ?

And then those sacred tunes that floated round the old gray walls of the village church, and haunt our memories yet ; St. Martin's, St. Thomas, and St. Mary's, immortal as the "calendar ;" Old Hundred, Silver Street, and Mear, and sweet old Corinth—Denmark, Wells, and Peterboro'—chance breaths caught from the choir above ! The faces of the Singers have changed since then. The girls are wives—the wives are dead. Those plaintive airs they sang around the open grave, beneath the maple's shade ! Lay your hand upon your heart, and tell me what is nearer to it than those old strains—tell me, can they die, while *that* beats on ? Die till the "great congregation,"

the missing ones all gathered home, strike up the sleeping song anew, in "temples not built with hands"? There's Tallis' Evening Hymn, the vesper of two hundred years! They sing it yet—sing it as *they* sang, in twilight's hush, and charmed our youthful ears. *They!* Who, and where are "they"? The loved—in Heaven! Perhaps they sing it there. Who will not say with Christopher North, "blessed be the memory of old songs for ever"?

And—"mind the step down"—the fashionable "scores" of these days of science and "executions"—the music of the parlor and soirée, thrummed on pianos, twanged on guitars, drawn out from accordions—the sounds that swing scientifically from round to round, up and down the ladder of song—now swelling like a Chinese gong—now quavering in the alto of feline distraction—now at the height of the art, and now in the very Avernus of the science—what element of melody or of soul have THESE, to charm the ear, to reach the heart, to live for ever? Was it Wesley who said the devil had most of the good tunes, after all? And what did he mean, save that out of the church and the drawing-room—off the carpets; on the bare floors of this great caravansary, in the street, and the cane-brake, and the theatre, where they clat-

ter castanets, beat the banjo, and sing in disguise, float some of the sweetest strains that modern times can claim?

Well, there!—I have “made a clean breast of it”—volunteered my opinion, “that shouldn’t,” of the new school of fashionable music, and live to tell it! How unfortunate—*isn’t it?*—but for Pity’s sweet sake, don’t pity me—that I was born a thousand years or so too late; and did I not believe that of the patient five who courageously read this article, four think in their “heart of hearts” as I do, I should not have placed my lips at the great confessional, with the “fearful hollow” of the Public’s ear so near the other side.

Music that *is* music, is a universal language, for pæan, plaint, and praise, breathed and felt alike by Greek and Barbarian, bond and free. The first we hear of it, those bright choristers, the “morning stars,” were singing a lullaby over the cradled earth, and the last of it—may we never hear—it is the dialect of Heaven! Every body loves it; every body—don’t deny it—has a tune or two laid up in his heart with the trinkets of memory—those little keepsakes of the past that every body loves to think of, but no body talks about; and he must be very much of a

fool or very much of a martyr who would dare it. If a man have a cherished thought or hope, it is wrapped up in a little song—it is *itself* a song. Samson's strength was hidden in a tress of hair; and so the strong men, the world over, who eschew poetry and music as elegant trifles, have hidden *their* weakness in some sweet air of old—the sesame to feelings they have survived—the prophet's wand to the rock they fancy seamless. Find that out, and they are even as other men—touch that, and their hearts lie in two pieces before you.

There is one, who never was born, a sort of man-at-arms to Minerva—at least so he seems to think—who made his *debut* into breathdom in boots and a beard, armed to the *teeth*, as Richard was, and for a like intent. Did you ever see him try to smile on childhood, without a lingering apprehension that he might play *Saturn* (see his godship's "bill of fare") with the little innocents? Look at his eye, cold and gray as November, and his brow, latticed with wrinkles, as if to cage "some horrible conceit." Time never ploughed such a "bout" as that. Who ever heard him sing a song, or whistle a tune, or even drum with his fingers at musical intervals? Who ever caught him assaying a pirouette or reading poetry—

heard him call any thing lovely or charming that couldn't be "checked," and journalized, barreled, baled, or bundled? No body. And yet he is an excellent man, upright as a mountain pine, regular as a chronometer, but some how or other, the place where his heart ought to be, is walled up—and taken altogether, he resembles a January night—very fair and very cold.

Now look at him as he is—a cast-iron specimen of the *cui bono* school, and tell me, was he ever in love? Did the light of his eye wax warmer once, and his tones grow deeper and softer, do you think? Get a clerkship with him, and turn over old ledger "A." If you find any account of Miss ——'s investment, or Miss ——'s venture; if you find the transaction duly booked, rely upon it, he was.

Is there not, then, in all that heart of his, one rocky cleft, wherein a flower may cling, in sweet memorial of a gentler time? Does there not linger round those walls of stone, some echo, orphaned now, of a joy "lang syne"—another heart responsive to his own? Is there, indeed, no hidden fountain, or no wand to wake it? Ah! yes. Of all the drums that beat life's reveille, there is not one, where'er it be, thrilling the fair billows of Caucasian bosoms, or

'neath the dusky vestment of Ishmael's desert sons, that *always* beats the dead-march of the past—some thoughts are sleeping there, “dewy with tears.”

Try him with an old song as he sits thoughtfully by the fire, between sunlight and lamplight—one of the sweet old songs our mothers sang. Hum it softly over. There's an impatient gesture. That's not the one? Another, then. He does not seem to hear you, but he does. Perhaps he looks fierce—perhaps “accompanies” you with tongs and fender—perhaps seizes a quill with nervous emphasis, as if to make a pen. No matter—sing on. He has cut it to the feather, ruined a best “Holland.” You have him now. You will play sunrise with this Memnon, by and by. “Where did you learn that?” says he, with a dreadful scowl. You need not tell him; he neither wants a reply nor waits for it. “'Tis a silly thing, and none but silly people sing—don't you know it?” Then comes a silence. Slowly he resumes the long-forgotten thread of thought. “It's a long time ago, since I heard that foolish song—twenty years—the evening before I left home”—then he *had* a nestling place once—“my sister sang it”—and a sister, too—“and she—is dead now. Do you know the whole of it?” he asks abruptly, turning to you—“sing it,

then." He listens awhile, grows uneasy, lights a lamp, opens a ledger, and pretends to write. "Pshaw." he mutters; he has written his sister's name across the page. He seizes his hat, turns toward you with a face at least a lustrum younger, and says, "there, that will do," and slowly leaves the counting-room. Now look at that ledger's page. It is blotted. Did he blot it? *He*, whose books are a fair transcript of his character—precise, unquestionable, and without stain or erasure! Yes, a blot, but *not of ink*. You have made a better man of him—started the dormant mechanism of his heart again, and set the little handful of irritable muscle playing as of old. And an old-fashioned tune—words in a primer, notes nowhere—that old-fashioned people sing with old-fashioned voices—alas! for that—trembling like a fast-failing fountain—such a melody has done all this.

'But the charm is attributable to association.' Is it? Approach the cage of the fiercest of his race—a Hyrcanian tiger, and softly play a sweet air upon your flute, but it must be a good one, for though tigers have little talent for music, they have a great deal of *taste*. He lays his huge head against the bars of his prison; his stormy breath is lulled by the magic potency of sweet sounds; he is a kitten again;

and yet, the time when, wrapped in a little striped blanket of his own, he slept in the mountain cave, with the tempest for his lullaby, has very little to do with the “charming.”

And the bright serpent—will my fair reader pardon the illustration?—that ribbon of living satin—Satan?—how does he,

“That rolled away loose as the sea-wave,
 ————— sweep up his coil
 Surge upon surge, and lay his gorgeous head
 With its fix'd, sleepless eye i' the centre ring,
 The watcher of his living citadel,”

when the Hindoo charmer breathes a tune upon the thrilled and slender reed? How does he arch his glossy neck, and quiver to the strain, his tongue like a lambent flame moving the while in mute accompaniment, thoroughly exorcised in the name, and by the spirit of harmony!

“I cannot silence such a voice as that,” said the *human* tiger, and he returned the steel gilded for the Singer's bosom, unerimsoned to his own—an offering snatched from the altar of blood, and transferred to the altar of song.

Yes, there *are* strings in every heart—don't you believe it?—that are not *all* worsted—that were not

spun in a factory built with hands—not stolen from a silkworm's shroud—not continuations of the purse-strings; chords of a nobler harp than Apollo swept, that sometimes play Æolian to the wings of angel thought.

Here, then, music has its origin—hence, like the winged courier of the ark, it goes forth, and hither it returns, with the blessing and the song of peace. All hearts—gentle Charity, look the other way while I write it—all hearts are not full strung, but what of that? Paganini made his fortune by playing upon *one* string, and Nature made some to be like him.

Physiologists tell us that if one, with whom the “daughters of music are brought low,” stand on the sounding shore amid the thunder of ocean, he can distinguish those softer tones, that had floated round him inaudible in the silence. And so it is with the bird-like voices of the purer and the past, that wander by unheard on muffled wing, yet sometimes amid the din and hurry of the thronged and dusty world, thrill ear and heart, and charm us, for a moment, back to our better selves, ere the spring array of life was doffed for the rustling gold of harvest, or bound in the sheaf to fade upon the floor of the thresher.

Age must bring its dower of the silver tress, but

what of that, if the *heart* be young? Music, as I am regarding it, is the great cosmetic that keeps it from growing old with years. But to be this, it must also be heart-born. If it springs thence, it will rise like a fountain to its height again—fountain? aye, that's the word!—and fall like it, in hope and beauty, over some *other* fountain that has ceased to play melodiously as of old—its sublime mission of beauty and blessing unended, till “the piteher and the wheel are broken, when the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.”

The Wind and the Night.

SOME of the fruit-trees hereabouts have strange ways of their own; indeed, I suspect a little apple-tree of being partly human. About tall enough to speak Everett's

“You'd scarce expect one of my age,”

there it stood, in full leaf, every one newly varnished, holding on with all its might to a huge apple, pendent from the very extremity of a limb, its first sole offering to Autumn and its owner. There it stood, as if

straining every woody muscle to hold the wonder up to sight, and by the air of its little top, seeming as plain as words to say, "Look at me and mine, won't you?" Vain, little thing!

Close by, stands another tree of about the same size, and sporting, like its comrade, one big, red apple. But it seems to have learned wisdom from its ambitious little neighbor, and instead of holding out its burden at arm's length, it has taken it 'at an advantage,' having thrown it carelessly over a limb midway, with two or three glossy leaves disposed carefully over it, for all the world as our grandmothers—God bless them—used to carry their knitting work, with the neatly-folded blue cotton handkerchief, and the white stars in it—(what has become of the blue cottons, and the stars, and the grandmothers? Lack-a-day! all alike, worn out, and faded, and gone)—laid carefully over it.

There stood the little tree, as nonchalant as a dead shot, as much as to say, "*that's* nothing to what I'll do, by-and-by." I'll wager something on that tree. Ah! that by-and-by! There's the song of youth and hope, and the beat of a heart, locked up in it. And who would hush the song and muffle the throb beneath the mantle of worldly wisdom, but a dog and a cynic,

and they are brothers. Sing on ! beat on ! say I ! It is the music of the march of life.

There's a Quince Tree. With its twisted, crooked trunks, springing out of the ground all together, and turning and crowding in every direction, before they make a final shoot upward into the air, it looks as if it had been in such a desperate hurry to get up in the world, that it hadn't taken time to make ready, and hardly knew which way to go, when it *got* up. There are quite as many Quince bushes of the genus *homo* as of the "*Cydonia Vulgaris*," as the schoolmen call it. Well, tarts are pleasant, sometimes, if not *too* tart.

How the Woods welcome a breeze, and how varied the modes in which that welcome is given. Have you ever thought of it, and did you ever *see* a wind ? There's one coming now—a mere breath—creeping over the marsh, as if it would take the trees by surprise. Catch its portrait now, while you can. See it run over the tall grass, something like a shadow, with a sunbeam following hard after it. That Elm, with its pensile branches, like lace edging on the border of the meadow ! The wind has swung itself up into it, and sways to and fro, as merrily as a Canary in a ring. Down it glides, and away for that silvery

Poplar. How it shivers and quivers. Is the thing timid or glad? Glad, I'll warrant, all of a tremble with very joy. The breath takes courage, and strengthens to a breeze. There's "a brave old Oak," crooked and gray, like the tarnished old pendulum it is, swinging in the clear, sunny air, as it *has* swung these years and years.

That billowy maple feels it now. How it swells, and rocks, and rolls, with its green billows, that harmonize so perfectly with the blue sky. What song has gone up from those leafy deeps, morning and evening, evening and morning, many a long-gone summer!

And there, in the distance, a tall tree—I don't know its name—tosses its lofty boughs; as if it would fain go with the breeze, and float away in a cloud. And these little bushes—what a flutter there is among the small fry! How they curl down to the ground and lie flat in the long grass. Then, up they come, and look taller than ever.

The breeze is in all the woods, and all the woods are "a wave offering." Nodding, and waving, and trembling—rocking, and rolling, and swinging—shivering, and rustling, and tossing—the welcome of the Woods to the gentle wind. Deep, dark, glossy—velvety and silken greens are blended in the blast.

What a whispering, and elbowing, and crowding there is, while the wind sweeps up, with "the cap-full" of spray it dampens its wings with, a note of the tune the brook in the ravine trolls over to itself, and drops it, plump, in the midst of the woods, as *its* share of the welcome.

But the prettiest sights of all were, to see a Willow playing bo-peep with its shadow, reflected in the stream, as the wind, coming and going, bent it over the water ; and a little blue-eyed Flower, that grew in a chink of a rock, where it could look out all day, if it would, but when it heard the wind in the grass, back it drew, till the viewless went by, and then peeped cautiously out again, as if it feared the bold thing would return, and so it played "hide-and-seek" with the breezes.

Of all the trees I saw, one only was not the better and the livelier for the wind. It was a knotty, withered Hemlock, that stood alone, like a gloomy thought in the midst of beauty. As for the old Hemlock, it never moved ; there was not a leaf to rustle, not a bough to catch a breath. Solemnly it stood—the full noon could not gild it—the moon could not silver it—the rains could not make it grow green again.

An eagle, a bald eagle—sat upon its scraggy and blackened top—I am not “romancing”—there it sat, motionless. Something glistened at the foot of the tree, in the sand that had drifted up around it. I approached—it was a fish’s bones, remnants of a kingly meal aloft. The Bird of Freedom, inclined his body forward, his wings spread out like a sail ; a vigorous motion or two, and away he swept, through the realms of air ; a shadow floated on the sand below—a figure on the sky above—the bird was gone. A cloud muttered in the distance—perhaps there ; the sun shone overhead—perhaps *there*. At all events he had gone.

And are there not those, who thus bereft of summer hopes and glories, linger like that tree, in the midst of their fellows, *with* them, but not *of* them ? Of a spirit like that eagle, ‘dwelling apart,’ that *might* have been kind, but was made fierce—that *would* have sought companionship, but flung back into a dreary solitude, is now blent with the blaze of the sun, and now baptized in the gloom of the cloud ? But that tree was green once. Song and summer were among its branches, and that proud bird was a callow eaglet.

A night in the woods, and a mid-summer night !

Starry as the Alhambra, leafy as Vallambrosa, still as an emphatic pause. Trees are flung backward on to the sky, with every branch and twig motionless, shadowy, but distinct—every tree, a great leaf of itself, as if Heaven would give us there, a picture of the forest as *it* sees it—nothing but a leaf or two, breathless in the night.

Here I am, in a little room, looking out upon the scene. The moon, yet but half filled, rides like a silver barque, low in the west, and a fringe of silver mist, marks the course of a little stream, stealing through a ravine a quarter of a mile distant. The *swash*—not a pretty word but an expressive one—of the Lake, comes faintly to the ear, as the waves curl up the moonlight and the foam together, and lay them along the silvery beach. The uneasy, fitful tinkling of a bell, musical no where but in such a scene, seems to ring up “the Voices of the Night.”

The sound of a hundred little files is heard in every direction—we have fairly caught them at it—carving out the scollop of the leaves, and rounding up the buds. “Pshaw!” says some body—“it is nothing but a remnant of the locust tribe.”

“Katy did!” “Katy did!” resounds in every direction, and “Katy didn’t!” “Katy didn’t!” in a que-

ulous, Caudle-like tone, the affectionate response. "Katy!" "did!" "didn't!" "did!" "Katy!"—so it goes—the woods are filled with these domestic jangles. Who is Katy, and what did she do, and what if she did, and is she pretty, were questions that found no answer, but the still asserting, still denying "Katy did," and she didn't, of these queer insect gossips. Poor Katy!

"To-whit! to-who!" Minerva save us, if there isn't her bird, calling from his hollow tree, and "to-who!" "to who!" is the query still, farther and farther, till lost in the deep woods.

"Whip-poor-Will!" says some body from a tree close by the window, in a sweetly plaintive voice, and "Whip-poor-Will!" "Whip-poor-Will!" is the cry all through the forest. What for? What has Will done? But "Whip-poor-Will!" was the sole answer I received. And I fell to speculating: "Katy did," that's certain, and from the "to who," I infer—by the way, what would *you* infer?—well, I infer that Katy went to Gretna Green—so far, so good—"Whip-poor-will!" Thank you, my unseen advocate of corporeal punishment—that helps us out bravely—went to Gretna Green with poor Will. There it is, now, a plausible story, and if only there were some bird of

scandal to put it together, a rare bit of gossip it would make, to be sure.

Alas ! for him, may-be he is sufficiently punished without the—there they go again, in full chorus, like a gathering of crones at a quilting.

A single bark from the kennel ! a dozing hound is hunting in a dream. We are *all* hunting in a dream—happiness the game, the “little life” the dream, and how weary, ofttimes, is the waking.

“Um-m-m !” “ang, ang !” A thousand little horns nearer and nearer—here they are with an *ang-k*, and an *uzh*, as they come, like hussars, plump upon us. Now for the art of Roscius ! Gesticulation, pantomime, beating the bosom of the innocent air. What *were* mosquitoes made for ! Does any body know ? Down goes the window, out goes the light, and in go I through the “Ivory Gate” the poets tell of—the Gate of ‘pleasant dreams.’

The Stage is Coming.

“PORT” dashed into the house yesterday, overturned two chairs and the clothes-horse, and panted out, ‘the car-a-van is coming! Right on the hill!’ Caravan coming! What could a caravan be thinking of, to wander away into this quiet neighborhood? Yielding to the little fingers that tugged at my coat-sleeve, I repaired to the door, PORT’s tongue busy the while with, ‘do you think it’ll stop and show here?’ and ‘may I go?’ and ‘goody! goody!’ to a provisional affirmative.

And there it was, a huge coach, and no caravan, red as the setting sun, rocking over the hill, like a ship on a swell. Down it came, rolling and pitching into the valley, thundered over the little bridge, splashed through the little brook, till its wheels ground slowly and gratingly in the yellow sand.

It was an event—indeed *the* event of the season. No body remembered when a stage passed here before. The driver knew it, for he sat bolt upright on the box, and handled the ribbons with an air. The

'leaders' knew it, for they tossed their glossy heads, and curvetted gaily enough.

Memory put her name on the Way Bill, and Thought took a journey, a dozen years or so, into the past.

"Bright Improvement on the car of time" and steam, has caused the old coaches to disappear altogether, in many parts of the country, and with them, a chief remembrancer of other days. Time was, when the stage, like the Crocus, was yellow—brightened with the rain or splashed with the mud, always and for ever yellow as a Sunflower. But the hand of Innovation has dared to make them a fiery red or a jealous green—to dwarf their dimensions—to turn off "the leaders," and propel the puny craft with a pair of wheel-horses.

That old yellow coach! With what notes of preparation, it entered the little villages on the old "State Road!" How that immemorial horn drawn from its sheath, was wound and wound again, till the surrounding woods rang again, and all the town were at the doors, and every lower pane of glass was a juvenile face in a frame, to see who had come, and who was going, and all about it. How the old coach rattled and plunged down the hill—how it thundered over the bridge—with what professional skill, the

driver drew his long whip from the top of the coach, and made its Alexandrine lash ring again, to the leaders' right and left—with what a sweep he whirled up before the Stage House, and reined them in, till the coach rattled and rocked like a ship ashore !

It is early morning. The Landlord comes shuffling out in slippers—the maid stays her hand at the well, to see who gets out, and smile at the Palinurus of the craft—the Post Master comes across the street for the mail—a cloud of steam rises from the glittering coats of the panting team—the relay comes filing out from the adjoining stable—some body in a green veil takes the back seat, to the great discomfiture of two drowsy aldermanic personages—the mail-bag is swung up beneath the driver's feet—the door is flung to, with a slam—a short, sharp note or two upon the horn—an instant's handling of the ribbons—a drawing of the lash through the fingers, as a surgeon feels his scalpel—an “all right” from the drowsy Boniface, and crack, smack, clatter, swing, away rolls the coach, and with it, the day's excitement.

Then the acquaintances one used to form in the stage, whose memory will outlast the old coaches—Some body—perhaps the lady in the green veil, whom a lurch of the stage threw into your lap two or three

times as you sat *vis-à-vis*, occasioning two or three apologies, until you felt quite acquainted, and wished the coach would move slower, the mud grow deeper, or the hours longer, lest the time of parting should come too soon. And it *did* come, and though years have passed, and you are a Benedict these *lustrums* of years, you remember where you left her, and just what sort of a house, and what tree grew before the door. It was a maple, or a poplar—which *was* it?—you *meant* to go that way again, but you never did. And she—what's become of her? Why, she wears a mob-cap, perhaps, and those blue eyes of hers look through green spectacles.

So runs the world away!

A Summer Day in Haying.

FIVE o'clock and a summer morning! A few minutes ago, I witnessed one of the most beautiful spectacles ever presented to mortal eye: the opening of the GATES OF DAY, and the Sun standing upon the threshold, looking forth, like a prince in bright armor, upon his kingdom.

The blue walls of heaven, built up in the heavy masonry of night, parted, without a crash, nay, even without the soft and silken rustle of a curtain. The lights aloft, were put out, one after another, to give effect to the scene ; the gates of red gold swung back, noiselessly as the parting of soft lips in dreams, and a threshold and hall inlaid with pearl, were disclosed.

There was a flush, a gleam, and a glow over the lake, and there, paused the Sun, as if enchanted with the scene he smiled on. A moment, and he stepped forth, but there was no jar ; a moment more, and cloud, and wood, and hill, were all of a glory. And there was song, sweetest song ; the deep, blue Heaven was full of voices of unseen birds, that fluttered at the pale portal of morning.

Five o'clock and a summer morning ! A silver mist hangs along the streams, a few downy clouds are afloat, and the landscape is heavy with dew.

The cows turned out from the milking, are tinkling their way along the winding path to the woods ; the robins are calling to each other in the orchard, and an enterprising hen in the barn, is giving " the world assurance of "—an egg. Some how, earth, in such a morning, looks as if it were just finished, the coloring

not dry, the mouldings not "set," without a grave or a grief in it.

Noting 'the way of the wind,' and remembering that the sun 'came out,' as it set, last night, it is pronounced a good day for haying. So forth to the meadow they go, the farmer, the neighbors and the boys, 'armed and equipped;' a young bare-footed Commissary bringing up the rear with earthen jug and bright tin pail. Much talk of 'wide swaths' and 'mowings round,' with laugh and jest, beguiles the journey through the pasture to the field of battle. Coats and jackets fly like leaves in winter weather, and on moves the phalanx with the steady step and sweep, amid the tall, damp grass. One bends to the scythe as if it were an oar, and pants on in the rear of his fellows. Another walks erect and boldly up to the grass, the glittering blade the while, curving freely and easily about his feet. The fellow in Kentucky Jean, expended his strength in boasting, on the way, and labors like a ship in a heavy sea, while the quiet chap in tow, that never said a word, is the pioneer of the field.

On they move, toward the tremulous woods in the distance. One pauses, brings the snath to "order arms," and you can hear the *tink-a-tink* of 'the

rifle,' as it sharpens the edge of Time's symbol. An other wipes the beaded drops from his brow, and then, the swath-notes blend again, in full orchestra.

Onward still; they are hidden in the waving grass—all but a broken line of broad-brimmed hats, that rising and falling, seem to float slowly over the top of the meadow.

Ten o'clock, and a cloudless sky! The birds and the maples are silent and still; not a flutter or twitter in woodland or fallow. Far up in the blue, a solitary hawk is slowly swinging in airy circles over the farm. Far down in the breathless lake, sweeps his shadowy fellow. The long, yellow ribbon of road leading to town, is a-quiver with heat. 'Brindle' and 'Red' stand dozing in the marsh; the sheep are panting in the angles of the fences; the horses are grouped beneath the old oaks; Lock, the faithful guardian of the night, has crawled under the wagon for its shadow, now and then, snapping in his sleep, at the flies that hum around his pendent ears; the cat has crept up into the leafy butternut, and stretched herself, at length, upon a limb, to sleep; JEMMY is dreaming on his drowsy perch; and even the butterflies, weary of flickering in the sunshine, rest like full-blown exotics, on the reeds.

The children of the neighboring school, all flushed and glowing, come bounding down the slope, in couples, the old red pail swung up between; and the clatter of the windlass betokens 'the old oaken bucket' already dripping up into the sun, with its brimming wealth of water.

Twelve o'clock and a breathless noon! The corn fairly 'curls' in the steady blaze. The sun has driven the shadows around under the west and north walls; it has reached the noon-mark on the threshold, and pours its broad beams into the hall; the Morning Glories have 'struck' their colors, and a little vine trailed up the wall by a string of a shroud, shows decided symptoms of 'letting go.'

The horn winds for dinner, but its welcome note surprises the mowers in the midst of the meadow, and they'll cut their way out, like good soldiers, despite the signal.

Back we are again to the field; aye, and back too, upon the threshold of childhood. A chance breath wafts to us, the sweet, old-fashioned fragrance of the new-mown hay, and we are younger in memory than we'll ever be again. The angry hum of the bees just thrown out of house and home; and the whistling quail, as she whirled timidly away before the

steady sweep of the whetted scythes; and the shout of PORTER or JOHNNY, as the next stroke laid open her summer hopes to the day; and the bell-tones of the Bob-o'-links swinging upon the willows in the 'Hollow.' Can't you hear—don't you remember them all?

And have you forgotten the green knoll under the wide-spreading beech—or was it a maple?—and how hungry you were, at the morning lunch, just from sympathy, though you hadn't 'earned your salt' for a week? And the brown jug filled with pure cold water, and—in those old times, you know—the little black bottle, with something stronger, just 'to qualify' it, as they said, that nestled lovingly together, amid the cool and dewy grass in the fence-corner? I am sure you remember how the magnificent loads went trembling into the barn, you upon the top, and how they heaped the new hay into the empty 'mow,' till it was half as high as the ladder—up to the 'big beam'—up to the swallow-hole; and how you crept up with a young troop, and hid away in a dark corner, festooned with cobwebs, and 'played' you were a 'painter' or a catamountain, and growled terrifically, to the unspeakable dread of your little brother, or cousin, or some body. Or, how, wearied of the

frolic, you lay upon the hay, and counted the dusty sunbeams, as they streamed through the crevices in the loose siding, and wondered how they got out again, and how many it took to make a day, and passed your fingers through them, to and fro, and marvelled that you felt nothing.

Many a time, you know, you crept through that same meadow with MARY GRAY—don't you remember MARY?—she lived in the house just over the hill—strawberrying. You picked in *her* basket—don't deny it—and you always felt happier than when you filled your own, though you never knew why. You had a queer feeling sometimes about the heart, though you never knew what. You have found it all out since, no doubt.

And MARY—what has become of her? Why, 'There is a Reaper, whose name is Death,' that goes forth to the harvest in sweetest Spring and latest Autumn and deepest Winter as well, and Mary and Ellen and Jane were long ago bound up in "the same sure bundle of life!"

Seven o'clock and a clear night! The shadows and the mists are rising in the valleys—the frogs have set up their chorus in the swamp—the fire-flies are showing a light off the marsh—the whip-poor-wills

begin their melancholy song—a star blazes beautifully over the top of the woods, and the fair beings that people our childhood, come about us in the twilight—the fair beings

“Who set as sets the morning star, that goes
Not down behind the darkened west, nor hides
Obscured amid the tempest of the sky,
But melts away into the light of heaven.”

The Dead ! Cold word is dead. What dumb is to voice, and deaf is to ‘the daughters of music,’ that, dead is to life. ^

Shall we know them again ? Oh ! question, a thousand times asked, and a thousand times answered, ‘indeed and indeed !’

I would not, if I could, shake so sweet a faith, but beautiful souls, you and I have known, that dwelt in tents of Kedar ; spirits ‘express and admirable,’ that looked, life-long, through dim and clouded eyes ; lips touched with a living coal from Inspiration’s altar, that were never modelled from Cupid’s silver bow.

There was ‘old Jonah,’ as every body called him, who ended his days in a cellar ; an African and a pauper. Deformed, almost repulsive, old Jonah had a beautiful soul—that crazy, blackened tenement had a royal occupant.

And when, in sunny days, the old man crept out, and sat by his cellar door, youth and age, and I have seen beauty too, often paused to catch a gleam and a glimpse of the light hidden in that dark lantern.

Said a friend to him, one day, 'Wouldn't it be pleasant to die, some lovely summer morning, like this, Jonah?'

'No, no, Massa, me die in night—better den.'

'Why, Jonah?'

'Cos Heaven right in sight—but little way to go.'

'Jonah,' playfully remarked some one, 'what a pity you are black!'

'Oh! no,' eagerly interrupted the old man, 'me'll be some body yet—me in disguise here. Much'sever you'll know me, when we bof git ober Jordan. You'll see a man a comin', so splendid and beau'ful, and you'll t'ink him some body bery great, and you'll talk with him long time, and den, he'll jes whisper '*Jonah*' in your ear, for 't'll be me all time!'

Old Jonah is dead and gone; and don't you think, when the tent was struck, and the curtains were withdrawn from the windows, and there were no more sighing and dying for him, that he threw off the disguise, he had worn so long? That the old man was

right, when he said, 'much'sever you'll know me, when we bof git ober Jordan?'

Surely it is not strange, either, that we should people the stars with those who have gone on before; that we should fancy their gentle eyes bending upon us at twilight, 'cos,' as the old man expressed it, 'Heaven right in sight.'

But there blazes the star still, over the woods.
'Tis

The Flag-star of Eben.

SHE lieth just there in the offing of Heaven,
Awaiting the flag at the window of Even;
Lo! the signal of crimson and gold is unfurled,
And it flingeth a glory that flusheth the world!

No sound of artillery smiteth the ear—
So calm you can catch e'en the fall of a tear!—
That foot-print of grief, on the cheek that is wet
At thoughts of the past, we would never forget.
A moment, that banner is burning the sky—
A moment, its beauty is lighting the eye—
A moment—its glory and beauty depart,
Transferred to the sky in the west of the heart.

Behold now, far out in the harbor of Heaven,
A light like a star, from the Flag-ship of Even!
Her silver-fluked anchor, so steady and true,
As lightly is swinging and dripping with blue,
As swung o'er the sleeper the Bethel-bent beam
That trembled to earth in the Patriarch's dream!

Her cable of crystal, and spars of the day,—
Beneath her dance doubles, and spangle her way!
Her sails of weft glory, her cordage of light!—
Oh! bravely she rides on the billows of night!—
Those billows that break on the shores of our earth—
The pulse of an infant awaking to birth.

As glimmers the moon through the rack of the storm,
So, hard by her helm, I can fancy a form;
The form of an Angel, with tremulous wings,
A look deep and tender—a vision that brings
A pang to the heart and a tear to the eye,
For loved ones and lost ones that never can die!
Whose better and brighter e'en death cannot sever—
Enshrined in the soul, and enshrined there for ever!

Oh! child of my dreams—indweller of Heaven!
I see thee conducting the Flag-Star of Even!
Oh! Flag-Star of Even! I would it were mine,
To leave this dull port and become one of thine!

Not a breath moves a streamer, or rattles a shroud;
On she comes like the morn, and still as a cloud!
On she comes through the clear azure sea of the ether,
From God's throne co-etern', to earth's cradle beneath her.
No crashing of wave, no thunder of billow—
Calm as a maiden's cheek pressed to her pillow!
As forms of bright clouds in the waters beneath,
As dim o'er the mirror just touched by a breath,
So silently on through the motionless Heaven,
To the gates of the west sweeps the Flag-Ship of Even—
O'er the heaven-bathed hills on the verge of the world,
O'er the tremulous woods, her sails but half furled,
She rides on the billows that break from the shore,
She comes—ah! she wavers, and nears us no more!

- Hark! soft to mine ear from the Flag-Star of Even,
The sweet and unwritten Ionic of Heaven!
Like the foot-fall of thought in the halls of the soul?—
Like the coming of twilight, around me it stole—
Like the music of wings it filled all the air,
And I knew in my soul, a spirit was there!

The words that were said, I can never impart,
They smote not the ear, but they fell on the heart.
As glitters the dew in the heart of the flower,
So deep in my heart lies the thought of that hour;
When the breath of life's fever shall wither the will,
That thought in my heart will be lingering still!
When the fingers of Care weave thorns in my pillow,
Like lilies, there still on the breast of the billow, —
'T will heave with my bosom, safely moored in the deep,
Where the waters of feeling e'er sparkle and sleep;
When life's shadow grows long, it will linger there yet,
Like stars in mid-heaven that never can set.
Oh! vision celestial! wherever thou art,
Magnetic to thee turns the thought of my heart;
I have watched thee slow-threading the glittering flood
That pours round the throne—the *ÆGEAN* of God!
I have traced thee again, my beautiful one,
'Mid the splendors of day o'er the disk of the sun!
When the billows of morn break bright on the air,
On the breast of the brightest, my angel is there!
When the wings of my spirit are pluming for Heaven,
I'll wander with thee, gallant Flag-Ship of Even!

The Last Rose of Summer.

ONE of the boys brought me a rose, a red rose, to-day, or rather a red rose to *be*, for it is nothing but a bud yet; and there was wisdom in that, unusual in this queer world.

A full-blown blessing is pretty near ready to fade, and so the urchin brought me a rose before it *was* a rose.

Frosts stay late, and come early, in the great latitude of earth, and nearly all our hopes and happiness are in the bud—always in the bud. They seldom blossom—they seldom ripen—they keep us waiting for summer; ‘the early rains’ of the human heart fall, but somehow a winter intervenes between April and July—‘the latter rains’ are shed upon our graves, and the buds ne’er come to blooming.

Well, were there no ‘better land,’ no brighter skies, no fairer flowers, Death’s door would be a darker portal than it is.

But there is more about this bud, that the Chemist might find out. It is dust—nothing but tinted and fragrant dust; and into what forms, may it not have

entered, in the transmigrations of time ! Perhaps the very iron that lends the blush to the half-folded leaves, that the gentle winds *would* have unravelled, had it not been among "the last roses of summer," has given color to some cheek that grew pale when the King of Shadows came—some cheek that had glowed beneath the lips of beauty, or at the first soft whisper of love—some cheek whose elements were strown to the winds ; but kind Nature cared for them all, and shaped them out anew, in the bud of beauty that now lies withering before me.

So, if it ever be your lot—God grant it never may !—to stand by the grave of one who died in beauty—one whom you loved, living, and mourned, dead, and the little billow of green turf above her has subsided, and a rose-tree waves there, in the soft summer air, leave a tear on it, if you will, but *pluck not a bud !*

In what disguisings does the past still linger around us ! "The Dead Past !" It is *not* dead ; it lives in the flower, the fountain, and the bow.

Nay, the very tears shed by Humanity yesterday, are in the pearly and golden clouds of to-day.

In the grand cycle of being, Death is nothing but change—

“ a sea-change,
Into something rich and strange.”

SUMMER ‘was a lady—last night she died.’ A trifle too ardent sometimes, perhaps, but then, beautiful—but then, gone.

What a glorious company of Summers there must be, some where, to be sure ! Eighteen hundred and fifty-three, since the new count began ; and no body knows, very certainly, *how* many before that.

Oh ! for some new Machinist to arise, who shall construct a ‘brake’ for Time. Oh ! for a shrill North Easter, to ‘whistle it down.’ *Wouldn’t* we bring up Time at the first Summer Station he came to, and keep him in a Depot of flowers perennially ? June should begin in January—December be as ‘pleasant as May.’





Fireside Musings.

Fall.

FALL ! How eloquent the word ! The flowers fall in the gardens, the fruits fall in the orchards, the nuts fall in the woods, 'the stars' fall in the sky, the rains fall from the clouds, the mercury falls in the tubes, the leaves fall every where, and FALL it is.

The wind is sighing round the corners, moaning over the thresholds, singing at the windows, roaring over the chimney-tops, and harping through the forests.

The gray clouds look angry and sullen. The great, heavy drops come driving against the window-panes ; the cattle stand in the fields, with the wind astern ; the sheep gather under the lee of the barn. They 'banked up' the house, yesterday ; put the cabbages in the cellar, the day before ; will cover the potatoes

to-morrow. MACK and PORT call for their mittens—the blue and white mittens—the immemorial mittens, tethered with a string.

The black-birds, a rabble rout, hold high council of flight, on a dry elm in the meadow ; there is a twitter, and a flutter, and a great acclamation. Up go the swallows in a cloud ; away ride the sparrows on the billowy air. The robin and his wife hear the sound of wings in the thicket, and go too. The owl looks out from his hollow tree, and gathers still closer, his russet muffler about his ears.

The ridged and tawny fields look like corduroy ; their rustling and golden glories have departed. The corn stands shivering in long lines, wrapped in rusty overalls, like a regiment of

‘ Old Continentals in their ragged regimentals ;’

The pumpkins lie in great heaps, here and there, like cannon-shot.

Little ‘ flurries ’ of snow whirl doubtfully through the cloudy air, and sift over the dark, old fallow. The sun goes down with a bounce ; it is dark before night.

The asparagus is bundled out of the fire-place, the old andirons are wheeled into line, the hearth is a

blaze, the windows are curtained, the old circle is narrowed around the old-fashioned fire.

Just the season for Saturday nights ! What blessed things they are, and what would the world do without them ? Those breathing moments in the tramping march of life ; those little twilights in the broad and garish glare of noon, when pale yesterdays look beautiful through the shadows, and faces ' changed ' long ago, smile sweetly again in the hush ; when one remembers ' the old folks at home,' and the old-fashioned fire, and the old arm-chair, and the little brother that died, and the little sister that was ' translated.'

Saturday nights make people human ; set their hearts to beating softly, as they used to do, before the world turned them into war-drums, and jarred them to pieces with tattoos.

The ledger closes with a clash ; the iron-door'd vaults come to with a bang ; up go the shutters with a will ; click, goes the key in the lock. It is Saturday night, and Business breathes free again. Homeward, ho ! The door that has been ajar all the week, gently closes behind him ; the world is shut out. Shut out ? Shut in, the rather. Here are his treasures after all, and not in the vault, and not in the book,

(save the record in the old family Bible,) and not in the bank.

Happy is the man who has a little home and a little angel in it, of a Saturday night. Such a night as last night was : cloudy, gloomy, gusty, rainy. Casements rattling, storm driving, lake roaring along the shore.

So much for the out-door scenery. Now for the in-door ; a martin-box of a house, no matter how little, provided it will hold *two* or so ; no matter how humbly furnished, provided there is hope in it. Let the winds blow—close the curtains ! What if they *are* calico, or plain white, without border, or tassel, or any such thing ? Let the rains come down : heap up the fire, but it must be an open fire ; none of your dark, prison-looking stoves.

No matter if you haven't a candle to bless yourself with, for what a beautiful light glowing coals make, reddening, clouding, shedding a sunset through the little room ; just light enough to *talk* by ; not loud, as in the highways—not rapid, as in the hurrying world ; but softly, slowly, whisperingly, with pauses between, for the storm without, and the thoughts within, to fill up.

Then wheel the sofa round before the fire. No

matter if the sofa's a settee, uneushioned at that, if so be it is just long enough for two, or say two and a half, with the two or two and a half in it. How sweetly the music of silver bells from the time to come, falls on the listening heart then. How mournfully swell the chimes of 'the days that are no more.'

Under such circumstances, and at such a time, one can get at least sixty-nine and a half statute miles nearer 'kingdom come,' than from any other point in this world laid down in 'Malte Brun.'

Maybe you smile at this picture. Well, smile on, there is a secret between us, viz. : it is a copy of a picture, rudely done, but true as the Pentateuch, of an original in every really human heart. Are you so old or so wicked, that the cabinet picture is dimmed or damaged beyond 'restoration?' Then be shrived, make a Saturday night of life, and bid 'good night' to the world.

Maybe you think this a ridiculous picture : then Heaven mend and Alison cultivate your taste.

Maybe you are a bachelor, frosty and forty. Then, poor fellow ! Saturday night's nothing to you, just as you are nothing to any body. Get a wife, blue-eyed or black-eyed, but above all, true-eyed, get a little home, no matter how little, and a little sofa, just to hold two, or two and a half, and then get the two, or

the two and a half in it, of a Saturday Night, and then read this paragraph by the light of your wife's eyes, and thank God and take courage.

The dim and dusty shops are swept up ; the hammer is thrown down, the apron is doffed, and Labor hastens with a light step, homeward bound.

“ Saturday Night,” feebly murmurs the languishing, as she turns wearily upon her couch, ‘ and is there another to come ?’

‘ Saturday night, at last,’ whispers the weeper above the dying, ‘ and it is Sunday to-morrow and to-morrow.’

INDIAN SUMMER.

THE Year has paused to remember, and beautiful her memories are. She recalls the Spring ; how soft the air ! And the Summer ; how deep and warm the sky ! And the harvest ; how pillar'd and golden the clouds ! And the rainbows and the sunsets ; how gorgeous are the woods !

Indian Summer is Nature's ‘ sober, second thought,’ and to me, the sweetest of her thinkings. A veil of golden gauze trails through the air ; the woods, in dishabille, are gay with the hectic flushes of the Fall ; and the bright Sun, relenting, comes meekly back

again, as if he would not go to Capricorn. He has a kindly look ; he no longer dazzles one's eyes out, but has a sunset softness in his face, and fairly blushes at the trick he meditated. Round, red Sun ! rich ruby in the jewelry of God ! it sets as big as the woods ; and ten acres of forest, in the distance, are relieved upon the great disc—a rare device upon a glorious medallion. The sweet south-wind has come again, and breathes softly through the woods, till they rustle like a banner of crimson and gold ; and waltzes gaily with the dead leaves that strew the ground, and whirls them quite away sometimes, in its frolic, over the fields and the fences, and into the brook, in whose little eddies they loiter on the way, and never get 'down to the sea' at all.

Who wonders that, with this mirage of departed Summer in sight, the peach trees sometimes lose their reckoning, fancy Winter, pale fly-leaf in the book of Time, has somehow slipped out, and put forth their rosy blossoms, only to be carried away, to-morrow or to-morrow, by the blasts of November ?

And with the sun and the wind, here are the birds once more. A bluebird warbles near the house, as it used to do ; the sparrows are chirping in the bushes, and the wood-robins flicker like flakes of fire through

the trees. Now and then, a crimson or yellow leaf winnows its way slowly down, through the smoky light, and "the sound of dropping nuts is heard" in the still woods. The brook, that a little while ago, stole along in the shadow, rippling softly round the boughs that trailed idly in its waters, now twinkles all the way, on its journey down to the lake.

It is the Saturday night of Nature and the Year—

' Their breathing moment on the bridge, where Time
Of light and darkness, forms an arch sublime.'

There is nothing more to be done ; every thing is packed up ; the wardrobe of Spring and Summer is all folded in those little russet and rude cases, and laid away here and there, some in the earth, and some in the water, and some flung upon the bosom of the winds, and lost, as *we* say—but after all, no more lost than is the little infant, when, laid upon a pillow, it is rocked and swung, this way and that, in the arms of a careful mother. So the dying, smiling Year, is all ready to go.

"Ay, thou art welcome, heaven's delicious breath,
When woods begin to wear the crimson leaf,
And suns grow meek, and the meek suns grow brief,
And the year smiles as it draws near its death.

Wind of the sunny South! oh, still delay,
In the gay woods and in the golden air,
Like to a good old age, released from care,
Journeying, in long serenity, away.
With such a bright, late quiet, would that I
Might wear out life like thee, mid bowers and brooks;
And, dearer yet, the sunshine of kind looks,
And music of kind voices ever nigh:
And when my last sand twinkled in the glass,
Pass silently from men as thou dost pass."

HERE I am, to-day, sitting by an open window, the wind, as gentle as June, playfully lifting the corners of the paper I write on, and letting them softly down again; while yesterday, or the day before, I was in perihelion, nestled 'close in the chimney corner; and the wind——*could* it have been this same wind, now toying with the tassel of the curtain, that in such a mood, twisted up a little oak by the roots, that never did any harm, and hollow-voiced and frosty from the dim north-west, made penny-whistles of the huge, old-fashioned chimney-tops?

Nature is a good deal of a rhetorician; she loves rapid transitions and startling contrasts.

Time itself, all through the long-drawn past, is inlaid with day and night—night and day. Suppose it had been all day through the world; it would have

been 'all day' with us—our happiness, our interests, and life would be "dull" at eighty cents on the dollar. Now, we are like those wandering at leisure from room to room, in some splendid suite of apartments, divided by the dark and marble walls of night. We enter some beautiful day, pearl for its threshold and crimson for its curtains. With what music they rustle, as unseen hands lift them to let us through! And what varied surprises keep us on the *qui vive* all along, as we pass through it! And how gorgeous the drapery let down behind us, as we enter the dark opening in the walls of night—those walls God built, and yet, through which, at a thousand points, shine divided days, yesterday, and to-morrow!

And what a lamp—no 'Astral,' but a true Lunar, is hung in the passage-way; and then, when we have done wandering through this great temple of Time, and pass the last door, and the veil closes down before the last day, and we find ourselves "out-doors" in the Universe, and free to go whither we will—children again—aye, children "just let loose from school," how we shall scatter away over fields all flowers, and no frosts, where there is no such word as November, and no such thought as death. Life will be life still, but without its struggle, and ourselves still ourselves, but with windows all around the soul.

We shall see hearts beat as plainly then, as we now see the movements of delicate chronometers beneath their crystal cases—emotions will be visible—the footfalls of thought audible—the trickery of light and shade by-gone, and things will appear as they are.

And the pleasant surprises that shall meet us then; perhaps the trees will grow by music, and the streams murmur articulate; perhaps we shall meet and recognize those who had gone on before. New scenes, new beauties, new thoughts—every where ‘*plus ultra*’—more beyond.

“AND SUCH A CHANGE.”

THE glories of twilight have departed, and the gray night of the year has, at last, set in.

The tree by my window has thrown off the red and yellow livery it has worn of late, and with naked arms tossing wildly about, stands shivering in the gusts, dismantled and desolate. Strange to say, I love it better than when song and shadow met in its branches—better than ever; but it is not a love born of pity; it needs none, for its life is locked up safely in the earth beneath, and whistle as it will, the boatswain of a winter wind cannot pipe up a pulse or a

bud. Through its leafless limbs, I can see Heaven, now, and there are no stars in the trees in June.

The Sweet Brier creaks uneasily against the wall ; the snow is heaped on the window-sill ; the frost is ' castle-building ' on the panes ; the streams are dumb ; the woods stand motionless under the weight of white winter.

It is Saturday—Saturday afternoon ; the children " just let loose from school," and Clear Lake is swarming with juvenile skaters.

Grouped here and there in clusters, like swarms of bees or bevvies of blackbirds in council, now and then, one and another and a third dash not in graceful circles, with motion as easy as flying. Huge sixes and sweeping eights, and eagles with enormous length of wing, are " cut " upon the " solid water."

Presently, the whole cluster break and fly in every direction, like a flock of pigeons. There go a brace in a trial of speed ; there, a Castor and Pollux, hand in hand ; here, a game of goal is going on, and here, a game of " red lion."

Away there, lies a little fellow upon his back, taking his first lesson in Skater's Astronomy. Ask him, and he will tell you he ' saw stars ' but a moment ago, that never were named.

The sun is going down in the west, and they have been upon the ice since high noon. But what is that to them? What care they for cold, and fatigue, and time? Saturday comes but once a week, and ice hardly once a year. But they'll find ice enough by and by—ice in midsummer—iced hopes, iced friendships, icy hearts. And as for the Saturdays, they'll grow "few and far between"—they'll not come once a week, nor once a month; and happy will he be, who has a Saturday afternoon and evening to end his life with.

Then who says, the boys sha'n't skate? Who grudges them the "rockers?" Look at that little fellow now; on one arm, hang his skates, "a brand new" pair, glittering like a couple of scimeters. 'Tis his first appearance on the Skater's field. Down he gets upon the ice; his little red and white mittens tethered with a string, lie beside him, while with his chubby red fingers, he dallies and tugs with buckles and straps, every now and then blowing his fingers to keep them in a glow. All right and tight, he's rigged, he's ready, he's up and off! What warrior ever harnessed for the field and the fray, with a richer pride mantling his check, or a brighter joy

lighting his eye ! There may have been one or two, but there is no record of them in Froissart.

MUSING here by the sleepy fire, this stormy night, about "one thing and another," the chime of bells, little and big, comes sweetly to my ear through the snowy air.

Those sounds are mnemonic—they are the sweet bells of the past ; and in the time of a single note, we are back again into the vanished years, in a winter's night, the moon at the full, "some body very near," and the merry bells ringing as they ring now. How silvery were the laughs that issued then, from beneath the downy mufflers and quilted hoods. How bright were the eyes that glittered through green veils then, like stars through a leafy wood.

Bells ! There have been *knells* since then, and those who "make no new friends," must journey alone. You who vaunt upon life and station, and the permanence of things earthly, return to the scenes of your youthful days of a winter's night. And the 'turn out'—let it be as of old, and call here and

there, where dwelt the companions of a brighter time. Here the stranger, there the estranged, and there, echo answers to your impatient rap.

The horses are at the gate, eager to be gone, and shake music from those bells at every toss of the head. But it is *not* music to you, and turning slowly homeward, you pass, in the moonlight, a field furrowed with many a drifted heap. It is "God's Field," and many who were your companions on just such a night, lie silent there. Ay! muffle the bells for memory, and pass on, a sadder but a wiser man.

The Old Times and the New.

How's your memory? Does it run away back to the days of life's "drowsy east," and do the days that are gone shine yet upon the further borders of it? Or have you one of those narrow memories, not broad enough for any thing but yesterday and the day before? And what do you keep in it? Have you turned it into a blotter to put "credits" to yourself, and "debits" to some body else in; a sort of meagre Almanac of "bills receivable?" Or is it a beautiful

place, like Laurel Hill or Greenwood, filled with the past—sweet records of joys departed—brighter days and downier hours? If so, and I hope so, do you remember the village church, and the choir, and the minister, and how they used to do then, and all about it? And what wouldn't you and I give, to be set back into the middle of one of those long Sunday afternoons, in one of those old-fashioned square pews, with our feet swinging about eight or ten inches above the floor, mother on one side with the everlasting sprig of carraway; father on the other; the singers on the high seats, away back; the minister come, and all ready? Don't you remember the pulpit? A queer thing, shaped like a swallow's nest, and fastened like a swallow's nest to the wall, about midway between floor and ceiling. Or perhaps it was a great, square, two-story device, with the architecture of a wheat-bin, and a dungeon of a place to put wood in, underneath. I'll wager a "concordance" it was one or the other. And what wouldn't you give, to have the faith in one man that you had in that old-fashioned minister? Were you afraid of thunder, and don't you recollect when father asked him home because it was likely to rain, and it *did* rain, and the thunder jarred the tangled sunbeams out of the

cloud, how safe you felt because the minister was there? Ah! a child's sweet faith was made before Franklin dreamed of fixing bayonet against the tempest. And do you remember the day he died, and how you wondered so good a man could die—how it shook your confidence in the permanence of earthly things, and made you sad and fearful, and gave you something to think of, when the folks thought you were asleep? And how he preached! What simplicity, what eloquence, what fervor! But alas! for it, 'the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended.'

And don't you remember how the gray heads were sprinkled among the congregation of tresses 'brown in the shadow, golden in the sun,' like the first snowflakes of November? Well, they are not there now. There has been a sun or so too many, and melted them all away. Old Deacon so-and-so, that used to sit hard by the pulpit, now sits on the bank of the river that runs hard by the throne. Who can doubt it? He had a heart open as the day to melting charity; he sang a little too nasal, then, we remember, but he has a "new song" and a new harp now.

Those were the good old times of the Church, nearer the days of the Pilgrims, the Covenanters, and

Heaven. New songs, new sermons, new doctrines, and new faces have taken their places. Sacred be the memory of the old times for ever !

Q u e e r E s t i m a t e s .

“ How much did it weigh ? ”

“ Is it possible ? ”

“ I never ! ” “ You don’t say it ! ”

Thousands of times has this question been asked, and thousands of times has it been wondered at and ‘ I never’d.’

And what commodity is it that is ‘ great’ at ten pounds and a marvel at thirteen ? Don’t mind the Price Current, for it isn’t there. It was a something bundled in a flannel blanket—the blanket securely pinned and knotted at the corners—the something, in an active state of ‘ unrest,’ as the transcendentials have it. The steelyards had been called into requisition, and its bended iron was indeed ‘ hooks to hang a hope on.’ The little bundle was swung up ; the weight clicked along the bar. “ *That’s* the notch ! Eight and a half ! ” Eight and a half of what ?

Why, of—humanity. By the memory of Malthus, there's a *baby* in the blanket! So there is—a little voter, or, if not that, as Shakspeare says, 'a child.' Something that may cut a figure in the world, break heads or hearts—have a great name, and be a man or a woman. Eight pounds and a half of a hero or a heroine, a monster or a minister. Piety and patriotism by the pound. Beauty and baseness by the blanketful. Queer measurement, isn't it? but there are queerer still.

Time wears on apace with us all, and the something in the blanket too. He is a boy of five. He stands erect as God made him, 'that he may look,' as a writer finely says, 'upon the stars.' They are talking again, but the steelyards hang undisturbed in the cellar-way. No use for them now. But they are talking, and we not listening

'Tall of his age, *isn't* he?' 'He looks over the table like a man; the 'high-chair' was put away *months* ago!'

Tall, is he? Three feet and an inch high, and this is the *altitude* of humanity. Weight is out of the question; estimates all run to height. Ambition is but another name for altitude, and success a synonyme for 'getting higher.' The boy is a man; the

man climbs rostrums to get higher ; thrones, to get higher ; mountains, to get higher. Monuments go up ; shouts go up ; favorites go up to court ; conquerors go up to glory. Height, height, every where height. Six feet of glory ; six feet two, of honor and dignity. Queer again—don't you think so ?

By and by—melancholy trio—the form is bent a little, and there goes an inch or two from stature. He or she is looking at something in the dust. What can it be ? Surely it is not a *grave* they look at. Eyes grow dim, and they bend lower to see. To see ? What can there be to be seen, we wonder ?

By and by, they weary, and throw themselves along the bosom of the dusky mother of us all. They sleep—sleep, but they do not *dream* ! Where are your altitude now, your mountains, monuments, and thrones ? Men take up the sleeper, carefully, slowly, as it were a treasure. And so it is—a treasure of dust. The old estimate is resumed ; weight has come again ; 'tis ' a dead weight '—nothing more.

And *this* would be queer, too, if only it were not sad.

But they are talking again. 'She had *three* names, hadn't she ?' 'Indeed, but I can remember but two.'

Remember but two, can they? Names of what? Why, of all that weight and height of fame and love, and hope and fear, and thought and passion.

And two words—two breaths of air—two murmurs, are all that is left of what once was a man, a woman.

Years elapse, and Age is talking again: 'There was—was—I cannot remember the *name* now—well, well, it's what we are all coming to,' and the old man sighs sadly.

The last syllable of all, has died on the lip, is erased from memory, ripples not the still and listening air—is lost; not a murmur of it lingers in 'the fearful hollow' of a human ear! 'Pah! how the dust flies!' Dust, do you say? Listen, and we will whisper just a word: that dust was warm once, loved once, beauty once.

"Imperious Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
Oh! that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!"

What more significant comment upon the vanity of royalty *could* be given, than Hamlet's next words? There is a meaning in them beyond speech:

'But soft! but soft! aside: Here comes the KING.'
That dust again! There *goes* a King, may be.

A Voice from the Past.

WALKING 'up the road' by the woods, the other evening, the music of the choir in the old School-house, came floating out into the darkness around me, and they were all new tunes and strange tunes, but one. And that one!—it was not sung as I have heard it, but it awakened a train of long-buried memories, that rose to me even as they were, ere the cemetery of the soul had a tomb in it.

It was sweet old Corinth they were singing—strains I have seldom heard, since the rose-color of life was blanched; and I was, in a moment, back again to the old village church, and it was a summer afternoon, and the yellow sunbeams were streaming through the west windows, and the silver hair of the old Deacon who sat near the pulpit, was turned to gold in its light, and the minister, who, we used to think, could never die, so good was he, had concluded 'application' and 'exhortation,' and the village choir were singing the last hymn, and the tune was CORINTH.

It is years—we dare not think how many—since then, and ‘the prayers of David the son of Jesse, are ended,’ and the choir is scattered and gone. The girl with blue eyes that sang alto, and the girl with black eyes that sang air; the eyes of the one, were like a clear June Heaven at night, and those of the other, like the same Heaven at noon. They both became wives, and both mothers, and they both died. Who shall say they are not singing Corinth still, where Sabbaths never wane, and congregations never break up? There they sat, Sabbath after Sabbath, by the square column at the right of the ‘leader,’ and to our young eyes, they were passing beautiful, and to our young ears, their tones were the very ‘soul of music.’ That column bears still, their pencilled names as they wrote them in those days in life’s June, 183—, ere dreams of change had o’ercome their spirits like a summer cloud.

Alas! that with the old Singers, most of the sweet old tunes have died upon the air; but they linger in memory, and they shall yet be sung again, in the sweet re-union of song that shall take place by and by, in a hall whose columns are beams of morning light, whose ceiling is pure pearl, whose floors are all gold, and where hair never turns silvery, and hearts

never grow old. Then she that sang alto, and she that sang air, will be in their places once more, for what could the choir do without *them*?

Waiting.

PATIENT reader, did you ever wait? Are you any way related to the patriarch of Uz, and did you wait, meekly, quietly, resignedly? Longfellow hit it once, 'palpably,' when he enjoined upon all his readers,

'Learn to labor and to wait.'

Laboring and waiting compose the great business of life. Any sinner can do the former, but as for the latter, it takes a saint.

Wait? We are forever waiting. Don't you remember when you were waiting to throw off the 'rifle-dress,' for pantaloons, and the red stubby shoes for regular boots, just like father's, or uncle's, or some body's? 'You are a lady?' Beg pardon. Well, ladies never get beyond thirty-five, and you can remember how you waited till you could wear your hair 'done up behind,' with a comb, and sport—a—well, what politicians like to make—a *bustle*. And

don't you remember how you waited for a beau or a belle, or to be eighteen or twenty-one ? Every body waits. School-children wait for 'the last day' and vacation ; undergraduates wait for commencement and college honors ; poets wait for fame, and like their funeral trains, if they *have* any, it is posthumous ; agriculturists wait from seed-time till harvest ; politicians wait from campaign to campaign ; preachers wait for 'the moving of the waters ;' watchers wait for morning ; the weary wait for evening, and the old and friendless wait for dying.

Sad are they who have no body to keep them company. There *is* a waiting Angel, and her name is HOPE, for what is Hope but a happy waiting ? Religion has made her an *arch*-angel, and christened her Faith. The former looks into the future of this world, and the latter looks into the future of that. Maybe you call this transcendental, Germanic ; maybe you call it nonsense. Be it so ; it is a nonsense that will pass under the guise of wisdom by and by, when the masquerade of life is ended, and 'things *are* what they seem.'

So, Hope and Faith together, are for ever singing a little song, whose burden is

It will all be right in the Morning.

I.

When the bounding beat of the heart of love,
And the springing step, grow slow ;
When the form of a cloud in the blue above,
Lies dark on the path below,
The song that he sings is lost in a sigh,
And he turns where a STAR is dawning,
And he thinks, as it gladdens his heart and his eye:
'It will all be right in the morning!'

II.

When 'the strong man armed,' in the middle-watch,
From life's dim deck is gazing,
And strives, through the wreck of the tempest, to catch
A gleam of the day-beam's blazing;
Amid the wild storm, there hard by the helm,
He heeds not the dark ocean yawning ;
For this song in his soul not a sorrow can whelm:
'It will all be right in the morning!'

III.

When the battle is done, the harp unstrung,
Its music trembling—dying ;
When his woes are unwept, and his deeds unsung,
And he longs in the grave to be lying,
Then a VOICE shall charm, as it charmed before
He had wept or waited the dawning:
'They do love there for aye—I'll be thine as of yore—
It will all be right in the morning!'

IV.

Thus all through the world, by ship and by shore ;
Where the mother bends over
The cradle, whose tenant 'has gone on before ;'
Where the eyes of the lover
Look aloft for the loved ; whatever the word,
A welcome, a wail, or a warning,
Thus is every where cherished—this every where heard :
'It will all be right in the morning !'

Death itself is a great waiting ; 'there is no more work nor device'—the laboring, which is the living, is subtracted, and we have that dread, dumb and dusty 'remainder,' they call death.

Some body, maybe, who wears a heart—a piece of extravagance, too, as the world goes—may analyze this compound of living, and find no love in it, and eschew the definition, and set me down as no philosopher. Laboring is loving, and loving is a good, strong, healthful action of the heart ; something quick, but not *too* quick ; something warm, but not feverish.

Work, and the heart beats ; the harder you work, the faster it plays, and one is just in the condition to love, when he is just in the condition to labor. Some people are too lazy to love, and so they wait till they die, and *keep* waiting, Heaven knows how long !

No Room for Two.

‘No Room for Two!’ was the exclamation of some insider, the other morning, as two persons were endeavoring to demonstrate that the capacity of an omnibus has no such property as *impenetrability*, by crowding into a carriage already having its prescribed six on a side. And so they retreated; bang, went the door, crack, went the whip, and away rolled the omnibus, toward La Porte, leaving the twain to go, emphatically, ‘by private conveyance.’

No room for two! An omnibus, ‘all full inside,’ is not the only place in the world where there is no room for two.

Ambition that, through ‘seas incarnadine,’ has attained power, can ‘bear no brother near the throne,’ for there’s no room for two.

Avarice, that has grown lean and hungry, as he ministered to the golden god he has set up and worshipped, has no place in his soul for sympathy; with *him*, there is no room for two.

Purpose, whose clear and single eyes descry a signal on the dim outline of the swelling future, and who

marches steadily on until he reaches it, says, to all that can divert, distract, delay, 'there is no room for two.'

Youthful Love, as she sets up a new presence in the shrine of her heart, 'made in the image of' a creature of dust, and surrounds it with all the offerings of a spirit affluent in generous affections, whispers to herself, as she does so, 'there's no room for two.'

He who has waited and wept during lingering and wearisome years, for the ripening of some blessing, that shall crown his life with a golden harvest at last, takes up the word, when that blessing comes, and exclaims, in the fulness of his heart, 'there's no room for two!'

And when we all—as all must—shall, one by one, lie down, we trust 'to pleasant dreams,' still comes that lonely voice, as eloquent as ever, 'there's no room for two!'

As the song has it, in its sweet refrain,

'There's nae room for twa, ye ken,
There's nae room for twa;
The narrow bed where all maun lie,
Has nae room for twa.

'There's nae room for twa, ye ken,
There's nae room for twa;
The heart that's gie'n to God and Heaven,
Has nae room for twa.'

The Grammar of Life.

‘Long time ago,’ some day this month—you and I should remember exactly—a man was born, whose name has been to the juvenile world ‘a household word;’ sometimes a word of terror, but now, as I remember it, a word to *conjure* with; to wave up scenes and forms long faded and crumbled. LINDLEY MURRAY! Did you ever hear of him? And do you not remember his little book, that like another ‘little book,’ was ‘bitter,’ and *never* sweet at all? And don’t you recollect how firmly it was bound, old Ironsides that it was, and what was on the fly-leaf—John, or James, or David Somebody, ‘his book,’ and that Lochiel-like couplet:

‘Steal not this book, my honest friend,
For fear the gallows shall be your end.’

And who printed it, ‘H. & E. Phinney,’ and the year, 1800 and something?

Shut your eyes now, and you can see every page of that old Grammar; just where the noun began, and the ‘verb to be,’ and Syntax, with its terrible code of twenty-two, exactly twenty-two rules.

And how like quarter horses, we plunged through the moods and tenses of the verb 'Love !' Who has forgotten, or who ever can forget, how it went, and we went ? ' I love, loved, have loved, had loved, shall or will love, shall have loved.' On we darted, through the eans, and the coulds, and the mights, of the potential, and the mysterious contingencies of the subjunctive, till we rounded to on the trio of participles that brought up the rear of this marvellous cavaleade of deeds, probable and possible, present, past and future, in the great art and action of loving.

And then, when you came to prepositions, how they puzzled you—how they puzzled us all ! Don't you remember the definition ? Right hand page, four lines from the top, just before conjunctions, on the threshold of Syntax ?

Thus it ran : ' Prepositions are words used to connect words, and show the relation between them ;' or, to give little Joe Miller's, or some other little fellow's version, ' Pep'sition word used c'nect words show 'lation 'tween 'em.' Showed ' relation ' did they ? And *what* relation ? Blood relation or relation by marriage ? And so we puzzled and pondered, and passed it over, and learned ' the list,' that went like a flock of sheep over a wall, ' of, to, for, by, with, in.'

And who has forgotten those queer contrivances of conjunctions, that connected and *didn't* connect ; and what a God-send the interjection was, in the midst of the fog, with its oh ! ah ! and alas ! Often had we employed it ; we understood, felt, appreciated it.

Then the wonderful process they called ‘ Parsing ’—wonder if they do it yet ; when we used to take couplets from the prince of English rhyme, and, a row of little cannibals that we were, there we stood, beneath the unwinking optics of our teacher, and “ transposed,” *alias* mutilated, “ paraphrased,” *alias* butchered, and every thing but devoured, his immortal lines !

Do you not recollect how we disposed of

“ In spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite,
One truth is clear—whatever is, is right ? ”

After much science and little sense, the light used to burst upon our bedazzled intellects, about once a winter, that Pope meant to say, and *did* say, “ whatever is right, *is* right ! ” Do they dream in the grave ? Does the bard sleep peaceful yet ?

And where’s the boy that sat next, in the grammar class ? And the bright-eyed girl, that used to whisper the answer so softly to us, and save our juvenile palms many an acquaintance with the oaken ferule—where is she ? Does she whisper hope and happiness

to any body still ? Are her eyes as bright, and her steps as light as of old ? Or has Death, that great bailiff, closed her eyes and set a seal upon her lips ? Who knows ? Who can tell ?

And the old schoolmaster, gray “as long ago as we can remember”—gray before that—does he teach Grammar still ? Is his step as firm, and his eye as steel-like gray as it was wont to be then ?

And the ancient schoolma'am, old Miss E., who lived in the yellow house next to the village green, and taught us spelling and etymology ; *she* too is conjured up by the spell of “ Old Murray,” and we see her looking over those spectacles, as she used to do when she meant to be “ awful.” One day she “ put out ” celibacy, and though 'twas the name of her lonely state—poor old lady !—that circumstance didn't let her into the pronunciation, and “ sillybossy,” for so she gave it, threw the class into convulsions. Great was her wrath on that memorable day. Two of us were imprisoned beneath the stairs ; two were sentenced to stand upon one foot, one held in extended hand, Walker's Dictionary—decidedly a *great* work, was that dictionary ; and a lad who was desperately ‘ afraid of the girls,’ was set between a bouncing brace of them.

But it wouldn't do. "Sillybossy" would not down, and smothered sounds, chokings, outright laughter, broke forth from every corner, around the perplexed and angry schoolma'am.

Years have fled; the tenant of the old yellow house is doubtless borne away, and "the places that once knew her, shall know her no more for ever."

So much for 'old Murray' and the memories it has awakened; and beautified by time, I can almost wish myself back again, in the midst of the days when Murray was a terror, and his pages a mystery

But why didn't 'the master' hint, sometime, that we should *never* be done with the tenses until we were done with time? That the world is full of them? That the world is made of them? That, for the sturdy, iron present tense, full of facts and figures, knocks and knowledge, we must look among the men in middle-life—the diggers and workers of the world; the men who, of all others, have discovered, for the very first time, at forty or forty-five, that the present tense is *now*; that in the shop, the store, the warehouse, the field—on docks and decks, the real, living present, reigns supreme? That, for the bright, golden, joyous future—full of the tones of silver bells and beating hearts, merry tongues and

merry feet, you must look in our swarming schools, peep beneath little soft blankets, in cradles at fire-sides, or examine small bundles of white dimity? That we should find the future astride of a rocking-horse; lullabying a wax baby; flying kites, trundling hoops, or blowing penny-whistles? Why didn't he tell us—or did he leave that for the poets?—that they who wear the silver livery of Time; that linger tremblingly amid the din and jar of life; whose voices, like a failing fountain, are not musical as of old; that *they* are the melancholy past?

Why didn't he teach us—or did he leave that for the preachers?—that “cold obstruction” claims *all* times for its own: glowing action, the present; hope, the future; and memory, the past?

“One pluperfect!” Ah! we have had that to *unlearn* since. “One future!” Who does not thank God, that, in this world of ours, there are a myriad?

“I shall be,” and “I might have been!” The former the music of youth, sweet as the sound of silver bells; fresh as

“The breezy call of incense-breathing morn;”

the latter, the plaint of age, the dirge of hope, the inscription for a tomb. The one trembles upon thin,

pale lips, parched with "life's fitful fever;" the other swells from strong, young hearts, to lips rounded and dewy, with the sweetness of hope and the fulness of strength. The one is timed by a heart that flutters, intermits, flutters and wears out; while that of the other, beats right on, in the bold, stern march of life.

"I shall be," and "I might have been!" What toil and trouble, time and tears, are recorded in those little words—the very *stenography* of life. How like a bugle-call is that "I shall be," from a young soul, strong in prophecy! "I shall be—great, honored, affluent, good."

"I shall be," whispers the glad girl to herself, as with one foot upon the threshold of womanhood, she catches the breath from the summer-fields of life, "I shall be—*loved* by and by!" That is *her* aspiration; for to be loved is to be happy,

"I shall be," says the struggling boy, "I shall be the possessor of a little home of my own, and a little wife, some day, and the home shall be '*ours*,' and the wife shall be *mine*, and then—and then——" Who can fill out those '*thens*?' Who, but the painter that has dipped his pen in sunset? Who, but the poet whose lips have been touched with a coal fresh from the altar of inspiration?

"I shall be—victorious yet," murmurs the man in the middle watch, who had been battling with foes till night fell, and is praying, like the Greek, for dawn again, that 'he may see to fight.'

"I shall be," faintly breathes the languishing upon her couch of pain—"I shall be better to-morrow, or to-morrow;" and she lives on, because she hopes on, and she grows strong with the "shall be" she has uttered.

And the strong man armed, who has 'fought the good fight,' and has 'kept the faith,' when they that sustained his extended hands through the battle are departing, and no Joshua to bid the declining sun 'stand still,' as he looks beyond the rugged hills of the world, and sees a window opened in heaven, and a wounded hand put forth in welcome, lays aside the armor he has worn so long and well, and going down into the dark river, he utters, with a hope glorified to faith, 'I shall be over the Jordan to-morrow!'

Before the memory has a tomb in it—before it becomes the cemetery, the "Greenwood" of the soul—"I shall be" is beautiful as an old ballad. When graves are digged therein, and willows are planted, and hopes are buried, and no light breaks out of the

cloud, then "I shall be" is as grand as an old pæan.
When

The battle is done, the harp unstrung,
Its music trembling, dying,

Then "I shall be" is as sublime as an old prophecy!

But there is another tense in this Grammar of Life it were well to remember; the sparkling moment that dances out from the ripening hours, like golden grain, beneath the flails of Time, as we write, and even as we write, is gathered into the great garner of the Past.

There is an injunction it were well to remember:

'Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant;
Let the dead Past bury its dead;
Act, act in the living Present—
Heart within and God o'erhead!'

Don't Forget.

OLD LETTERS! Don't you love, sometimes, to look over old letters? Some of them are dim with years, and some are dim with tears.

Here is one now, the burden of which is, 'Don't forget;' the device on the seal is, 'don't forget,' and

the writer thereof went, winters ago, to "the narrow beds of peace." But surely, she needn't have written it, for we *can't* forget if we would.

Don't forget ! They are common words ; we hear them, perhaps use them, every day, and yet how needless, we may almost say, how meaningless, they are. What is it we forget ? That which was fore'gotten, and set down in the tablets of memory, long ago ; set down, we may not remember where, we may not remember when, but it is there still. Remove with the palm of Time, the inscriptions upon marble—eat out with its 'corroding tooth,' the lettering upon brass, but that thing fore'gotten remains unobliterated. Some breath may whirl back the leaves of memory to its page—in some hour, an epitome of its contents may be unrolled before us. Every thought consigned to memory is immortal—its existence runs parallel with the mind that conceived, and the heart that cradled it. 'Don't forget !' We cannot forget. Earth is full of strains Lethean of man's invention, but the past is with him still.

New days, new hopes, new loves arise ; but 'pleasant yet mournful to the soul is the memory of joys that are past.' Our eyes are dazzled with the clear of the present, but dimmed with the cloud of the

past. Ride as we will, on the swiftest billow of to-morrow, we are never out of sight of yesterday. There it shines still, with a tearful, gentle light, like some pale Pleiad through the rack of the storm. "Don't forget!" Ah! the science that could teach men to forget, would be more welcome than all the trickery of Mnemonics.

When the heart beats sadder, and the tide of life runs slower, how the Yesterdays come drifting down to waiting Age—waiting for him who enters hall and hovel, unbidden and unstayed. "Don't forget!" Alas! who does not remember?

Even Ocean itself, busy as it is, in laving from its shores, all records of the past, is the great memory of the natural world. Clarence' dream was no fiction, and its treasures glitter, and whiten, and sway amid the groves of red coral. But even the Sea is not oblivious, for "the Sea shall give up its dead."

Blessed Almanacs.

WHILE I am writing these words, a pair of "bright particular" eyes, just on a level with the table, are following my pen in its eccentric movements over the page. Don't you and I wish *our* eyes were just on a level with the tables again! The owner of the eyes aforesaid, is a Lilliputian, not nearer to Heaven, as Hamlet had it, even "by the altitude of a copine," than PORT, and he lacks a sheet of paper of three feet. And speaking of eyes, where can you find a brighter pair of interrogation-points, than the eyes of a child? Seeing every thing, and turning every thing into a query, that they see?

Subject yourself for a half hour to one of these youthful inquisitors, and you are more of a philosopher than I take you to be, if he doesn't pose you, in less than half the time.

But small as he is, his ambition, like a vine in a garden, has run all over the month of December, and leaved and flowered at a tropical rate, some where near the 25th. 'How many days is it to Christmas?' 'How many Saturdays is it?' There is no

school on Saturdays, and the little rascal keeps his calendar by play-days! Well, *let* him, for few enough of them he'll find by and by, unless he lives on into the Millennium. 'And will Santa Claus come?—and how can he come down the chimney and the stove-pipe?—and does he come Christmas or New Year's?' There's that vine of his, a week longer than it was, a minute ago.

'Oh! have him come Christmas! Have him come Christmas!' and eyes, and feet, and heart, for that matter, all dance together. Have him come Christmas! There spoke the child of a larger growth. There peeped out the man, through the disguise of boyhood, thus early drawing on the future, like a gay heir in expectancy, to make up the deficits of the present—an extravagance, that has made many a man and woman bankrupt for the amount of a thousand hopes sterling, and 'the undivided half' of a life full of happiness,

Men have a weary train of days—days of care and toil, if not of tears; but children have, in their calendar, but four or five days in a whole year—Christmas, New Year's, and Birth-day, Fourth of July, and Thanksgiving—but they, like great lamps,

light up all the year, and keep the little fellows perennial candidates for hope.

How much happiness is purchased for how little in the Holidays ! And it is easily calculated that if eighteen pence will render a boy just turned of six, supremely happy, two-and-six pence will make a lad of nine, a prince.

Who *wouldn't* invest in such property !

But those eyes ; there they are yet, looking over the table's edge, and I cannot help dreading the time when they will look *down* upon it, and one can see shadows in them, and the *coming of a real tear* in them—for children seldom weep—and a heavy light in them, and dimness and death in them.

True, there are shadows there now, but they are like those

“by a cloud in a summer-day made,
Looking down on a field of blossoming clover.”

A cloud ! Life itself is a morning cloud, and whether with shadows or glory, glides swiftly and silently by.

The Wonders of "Galena."

SOME BODY, curious in minerals, has sent me a piece of Lead Ore, as bright in coloring and regular in form, as if it had been 'made by hand,' and there lies the little cube on the table, this minute.

I am informed it is some eighty-five per cent. pure lead, and it is very likely.

Lead is gray, sometimes "*silver* gray," it is dull, it has no music in it, it cannot be shaped into swords, nor yet into ploughshares, and yet it is not without its poetry.

True, we cannot make blades or bells of it, but we *can* make balls. Who would suppose now, looking at that dull lump of lead, that it ever 'took to itself wings,' like gold, its better, and flew away? I said it had no music in it, but I was too fast; I retract, for there is a little song in that stupid block, that has charmed *princely* ears before now. Was it Charles the XIIth, or Frederick the Great, that thought the singing of bullets, the *sweetest* of singing? Sing? Maybe you do not think lead *can* sing? But moulded into bullets, and flying like hail upon

the field of battle, you shall hear its song, as it hums by like a harmless bird. Often and often has it proved a knell to strong, tall warriors ; often and often has it made widows and orphans, and done what preachers could not do—brought tears into dry eyes. Ah ! there is a wonderful eloquence, as well as a wonderful song, in the steel-gray lead. Sometimes it sounds a little like a sigh, and it is not to be marvelled at, considering the errand it so often goes on.

But there is more about lead than has been told yet. Look at it now, so *cloddish*, so senseless. It has no endurance ; place it in the fire, and it runs away ; it cannot resist heat. Strike it with a hammer, but it gives out no ringing cry ; it is dumb.

And yet, senseless as it is, they have made a *nerve* of it, and hundreds of lives and thousands of hopes depend upon its doing its office.

Mists are over the water and clouds are over the sky, and the lights are out on the shore—the *lee* shore—and the vessel is bewildered, if not lost. They must move—they keep moving. Shall they go upon the rocks ? Shall they drive upon the shore, a broken wreck ? Heaven has no eyes for them, earth no eyes, *they* no eyes, and so they must *feel* their way into port.

Down goes the lead: "five fathoms!" "Six fathoms!" "Seven fathoms!" "All right!"

Take care! 'Tis shoal again! Heave the lead!—keep heaving. There! move on steadily. Deeper, deeper, grows the water. They have made the harbor. They are safe! They *felt* their way through the waves, through the night, through the storm; and the wonderful nerve was a line with a lump of Lead.

The Old-Fashioned Fire.

Down goes the mercury to the zero of Celsius and Reaumur. Down it goes again, to the 0 of Fahrenheit. The frost is creeping, creeping over the lower panes, one after another. Now it finishes a feather; now it completes a plume; now it tries its hand at a specimen of silver-graining. Up, up it goes, pane after pane, clouds, and feathers, and grains. Here a joint, there a nail cracks like a craft in a racking storm; but all is calm and cold as death. Clink! goes a forgotten glass in the pantry. The door-latch

is plated ; half-hidden nail-heads, here and there in the corners, are ‘silvered o’er with’—frost.

But what cared we for that, as we sat by the old-fashioned fire ? Back-stick, fore-stick, top-stick, and superstructure, all in their places. The coals are turned out from their glowing bed between the sentinel andirons—the old-time irons, with huge rings in the top. One of them has rested, for many a day, on a broken brick, but what of that ? Many a beautiful tree, nay, a whole grove, maybe, has turned to glory and to ashes thereon, and will again, winters and winters to come.

A handful of ‘kindlings’ is placed beneath this future temple of flame ; here and there a chip, a splinter, a dry twig, is skilfully chinked into the interstices of the structure ; a wave or two of the housewife’s wand of power, and the hearth is “swept up.” The old bricks in that altar-place of home, begin to grow bright, and ‘as good as new.’ A little spiring flame, ambitious to be something and some body, creeps stealthily up, and peeps through the crevices, over this stick, under that one, looking like a little half-furled banner of crimson. Then come another and another, and down they go again, the timid flames that they are ! By and by they grow

bolder, and half a dozen, altogether, curl bravely round the "fore-stick," and up to the "top-stick," and over the whole, like the turrets of a tower at sunrise, one, two, three, four, five spires. Then they blend together, a cone of flame. Then they turn into billows and breakers of red, and roll up the blackened wall of the chimney, above the jamb, above the mantel-tree, away up the chimney they roar, while the huge "back-stick," below all, lies like a great bar, and withstands the fiery surf that beats against it.

The circle of chairs is enlarged; the 'old arm-chair' in the corner is drawn back; one is reading, another is knitting; a third, a wee bit of a boy, is asleep in the corner; they look into each other's faces, look beautiful to each other, and take courage and are content. There is not a shadow in the spacious room; the frost creeps down from the windows; the ice in the pail, in the corner, gives a half lurch, like the miniature iceberg it is, and over it goes with a splash. The fire is gaining on it. The latch and the nails lose the bravery of their silvering; the circle round the fire grows larger and larger; the old-fashioned fire has triumphed. It is summer there, it is light there. The flowers of hope spring up around it; the music of memory fills up the pauses; the clock ticks

softly from its niche above the mantel-piece, as if fearful of letting them know how fast it is stealing away with the hours—hours the happiest, alas ! we seldom live but once ; hours whose gentle light so often shines from out the years of the long-gone morning, on into the twilight of life's latest close.

Ah ! necromancers swept the magic circle in times of old ; but there is none so beautiful, none with charm so potent, as the circle of light and of love around the old-fashioned fire !

Presto! Change!

THERE is a beautiful harmony and order in Nature, which the more one contemplates, the more he finds reason to admire.

Calling at the office of a friend, a while ago, who is 'curious' in matters of Mineralogy and Geology, I noticed upon a table, specimens of the wonderful, progressive operations of Nature. There was delicate moss, some of it yet wearing the color of summer ; and some had passed beyond "the sere and yellow leaf," and had apparently been bleached.

Near the moss, lay a fragment of porous stone, resembling in color and structure, though more compact, the whitened moss. Next to this was a specimen of firm rock; the pores were filled up; the whole had indurated, and there, but two removes from the green moss, lay the material of which Ambition rears his monuments, War his defences, and Love, her cherished homes.

And near all these, was placed a glass jar, which contained the agent that had wrought this wonder—pure cold Water. It is dumb now, but the time has been, it had a voice, and a song in it, as it went sparkling down over that moss, leaping into life and sparkling into sunlight.

It was indeed a beautiful series, in impressiveness far superior to the most eloquent description.

Nature kindly disguises herself, every where around us, and it is the eye of Science alone that detects in the beauty of change, nothing but the beauty of death.

Do my fair readers think—if I have any—while their pencils glide so freely with an ‘at home,’ over the polished surface of the India card, that the very surface they admire, is composed of the lunar shields of little warriors, who have fought the fight of life,

glittered like *all* heroes, their hour in the sunbeam, laid aside their armor and died ?

Do they think that little card, that little parallelogram of pearl, is the cemetery of thousands—that the beauty of that surface is the beauty of death ?

And so with the roses that blush in our pathways, and cluster round the graves of our dead. Could we but know whence their elements were derived—did we but think that perhaps the tint that gives beauty to the leaf, once colored the cheek of the loved, how differently would we regard these children of a Persian sun !

It was one of the beautiful and truthful sayings of an eminent naturalist, that the everlasting hills and the firm rocks, are but the relics of former life. They are indeed the alto-relievo records of things that were. The ‘rotten stone,’ composed of the crescent shields of little creatures that sported their day and died ; the white chalk rocks, the catacombs of animalculæ with limbs, and pulse, and armor for defence—people, a million of which, are comfortably accommodated within a single cubie inch.

En passant — do ladies ever study GEOLOGY ? There’s a catalogue—let us see : “ French, Philosophy ; ‘ Paley,’ Painting ; Worsted-work and ‘ Wor-

cester ;' 'Day' and Dancing ; Geometry and"—it isn't there. And pray, why not ? What is Geology, after all, but the History of the World, written by itself ; Time's own biography, printed and paged, collated and bound by the fingers of Omnipotence ? And here it is, written down to the last sunset ; not a leaf lost, not an illustration dimmed, since the 'first form,' creation's recorded smile, was flung off, damp with the night, and welcomed with a starry song. Go where you will ; from Erie's 'record steep,' whose awful flood yet chimes a perished age ; from the 'notched centuries' in her living rock, to the wave-worn pebbles, those notes the brooks sing by, and what are they all, but chronometers to mark time's viewless flight ; to tell the age of singing streams, and when those chimes began ? Turn back the leaves of this ponderous volume, ere human footprints soiled them, and yet how legible the record ! The leaf faded by that first frost in Eden, that fluttered down to earth, lo ! here each fibre of its frame in lithograph ! An insect's wing is there ; perhaps it trembled in the evening beam, ere tears or blood had stained the glorious page ; perhaps its fellow wilted in the breath of that first sacrifice. Here are they all, without erratum, blank, or blot. And what is

Botany, but the beautiful *binding*, the ornate title-page of this great volume, which few fair fingers have ever assayed to open ?

Voices of the Dead.

THE world is full of voices. Early morn, the deepest noon, the stillest night, each has a tune of its own. Here now, it is close upon midnight. The shouts of children and the clatter of wheels, and the clangor of bells, and the footfalls of the multitude have ceased. Men's hearts beat softer and steadier ; the engine fires have died out like fierce thoughts in iron breasts ; the World is asleep, and yet, how voiceful is the Night !

What a time for the dead to talk—the mighty dead—they are talking. Oh ! ye who think their utterances are confined to dim cathedrals, and charnels dark and old ! It is not so : they are in the thronged city ; in the stores, the offices, the shops—the dead and their utterances are, if you only had time to listen, and the world were still enough to let them be heard.

The Dead ! aye, look solemn, if so it seems to you—the Dead are in your apartment to-night, and would speak—they have been *waiting* to speak—if you would only heed them.

A few fragments of coal are glowing through the bars of the stove, and now for the first time, in twelve hours, they make themselves heard. And what a voice the coal has, to be sure. It is something like the murmur of a distant multitude—something like the pedal bass of an organ, a great way off—something like the jar of a railway train—something like a wind wandering through a wood.

And now I think of it, there is melody in the tone ; soft, mournful ; the plaint of the prisoned coal—its murmuring memories of better times—the voice of the Dead. And they *were* better. Better, when that poor fossil waved in a great glorious tree, all covered with Spring, all tremulous with Summer airs ; when music with wings, made nests in its branches ; when its leaves sang a song of their own.

Ah ! melody of another sort was that, from the low semi-sullen, semi-sad monotone it greets us with now, through the grate.

Fossil ! I called it a fossil, and so it is : something dug out of the earth. *We* shall be fossils by

and by ; beauty, a fossil ; youth, a fossil, and if not fossils, then plain-spoken dust. And when we—that ‘ we ’ means you and me—when we get to that, shall we give light like the poor Anthracite, or Bituminous, or Lignite, or whatever it is ? Shall our thoughts, our deeds, our hopes, make a little summer and a little day in the midst of the winter and the night of the world, like this insignificant coal ?

Here’s a piece of Anthracite—a *stray* piece by the by—lying on the hearth. We know it to be such, from its metallic colors, and its shell-shaped surfaces.

Ah ! “ it is *stone*-coal you speak of,” says the Englishman ; “ I ken it ’s *blind* coal,” puts in the son of old Scotia ; and “ it ’s *Kilkenny* coal ye’re afther spaking uv,” interposes an exile of Erin. Yes, for it has as many titles as a prince, it is all these. This fragment came from toward the head waters of the Lehigh perhaps, but for that matter, it might have come from Calton Hill in the land of Lochs, from Walsal in white-cliffed Albion, from dusky Norland, from old Holland, from Andalusia, from the Alps, from “ little Rhody,” for it is at home, nearly all over the world.

Some people are for ever talking of the wonders of the Imagination and the beauties of Poetry. Here

now is a beautiful wonder, and a wonderful beauty. That fragment of coal—we kick it about the hearth, we handle it with the shovel, we touch it with thumb and fore-finger as if it were glowing hot; we say of a desperate case, ‘black as coal.’ Wo personify smutted coarseness as a huge coal-heaver, and yet, this worthless fragment lacks but about twenty-eight per cent.—not as much as many a poor fellow has paid for the loan of a dollar—of being *all* carbon; and if we could only manage to get rid of the alumine and the silix, and the oxide of iron, why then, it *would* be, of a truth, all carbon, and *pure* carbon. “Well, and what then?” you say. Not much to be sure, and yet enough to sink the anthracite, the stone, the blind, and the Kilkenny, and don a new title; enough to make that thumb and finger a whole hand, to close over it with the clutch of a vice, all along through life, and away through into death; enough to turn earth into a battle-field, and redden the turf before sunset; enough to transform a fair-browed, open-souled boy, into a wrinkled, glowering old fiend.

And what is all this about, you inquire; what this carbonic wonder? A yellowish or bluish, or reddish or brownish, eight-sided crystal; a thing strown along from Bengal to Cormorin; a thing that glittered in

the hilt of the sword of 'the man of destiny; that the Autocrat of Russia waves in his sceptre; that glows on velvet round many a princely brow. It is—but what's the use of telling, when you know already?—it is that thing they call a DIAMOND—elder brother of the coal, the swarthy Anthracite.

“Brilliant,” “Rose,” or “Table” Diamonds—by whatever name, they call them—burn them in Oxygen Gas, which is nothing but the mere day-breath of flowers, and you have only carbonic acid gas—an element that transformed the Black-hole of Calcutta into the charnel-house it was—an element that you cannot breathe and live. And where's your Diamond!

Return we now to the black brother of these brilliants, the Anthracite. Examine it, and you shall find no trace of the wood it was. Cunning Earth has effaced each fibre, and made it a mineral treasure, and no tree can claim its kindred.

And how long, think you, has it been since that coal had the silken texture of a leaf, a flower, a shrub? How long since childhood slept beneath the shade it helped to make? How long since Beauty breathed its fragrance in a flower, and listened and believed that love was changeless? And the Beauty and the Lover, and the sentiment are fossils, or are dust, or are

nothing now, to you or me. Here now are two specimens of Mineral Coal ; the Black, the most common of the smutty fraternity, that brightens the grates of all England, and envelops it in a coal-heaver's "glory," and the Cannel or Candle-coal, with its polished surface, and its peculiar odor, and the crackling it makes when first heated. Cannel Coal when 'at home' in England or Scotland, Ohio, Virginia or Pennsylvania, has a *roof* to be under—a roof of slate, where Nature herself played tiler, and decorator withal, for those roofs of slate all bear imprints of ferns—the lithographs of old time. And last of all the brotherhood, I shall mention, there is the Lignite, with its clove-brown tint, and its woody texture. And better company it keeps, than the most of its genus. You may find it strown in the Amber Mines of Prussia, and amid the crystals of an Iceland winter ; Lignite betrays the secret of its origin, for there are the fibres still, the outlines of the branches and the leaves of trees, that once had life in them, and beauty and music.

Ah ! who wonders the Coal has so sorrowful a tone, as it glows and sighs there in the grate, with its voice of the Dead. The Dead ? We said, awhile ago, the *Mighty* Dead ? and it is mighty. Open that Atlas, lying under

your elbow there, and find for me New-York, and then pass your finger over that parti-colored robe of States, through the South Pass, away where you can fancy you hear the clink of the diggers of gold. Would you see the power that can weave that full breadth of space into something like a *selvedge*, with the Steam Engine? Look in that grate, and you shall see the thing that can do it. Do you see that Mountain's steep, and that granite column at its base? Ambition's self could not raise it to that mountain's brow with regiments of men, in half a century; but a dozen bushels of *Coal* can do it, in half an hour!

But those fragments of coal have burned out, and the grate is no longer of a glow. I take the shovel and stir the bed they have made for themselves. Nothing but ashes—ashes for the garment of mourning—ashes for the urn—ashes for the winds—the mighty Dead no more!

T h a n k s g i v i n g .

TO-MORROW is Thanksgiving Day. 'Come to think,' there was no necessity for telling it. There is no school, so the children all know it; no paper, the editors and devils all know it; the Governor has proclaimed it, and *every* body knows it. Some people have visions of turkeys 'about these days;' I don't. Some people have turkeys; I haven't. But no matter for that; I love Thanksgiving Day for the memories it brings with it. Do tell me, if you can, what has become of those old days, and why don't they make them so now? Has 'the clerk of the weather' lost the recipe, or what, in the name of scythes and forelocks, *is* the matter? It *used* to be, that Thanksgiving wasn't Monday, or Tuesday, or Wednesday, or any other day of the seven, but a day by itself, put in by "special act," to make people happy and friendly, and human, and all that; but some how or other, it has changed. Almanacs have changed, or *we* have; and greatly do we fear it is the 'we.'

Kind reader, I never saw you, don't know you, but here's my hand, and there's a chair; and now for a

tête-à-tête about old times. The last time you were at home Thanksgiving day—do you remember? When the boys came home from college, or some where, and the married sister, Ann, or Jane, or something else, came too, as proud of the little white-flannel bundle, *with blue eyes*, that made uncles, aunts, grandfather and grandmother, with its first glance, as ever queen was of her crown? And wasn't that baby a novelty in the old homestead? And was it you or me, that rummaged the garret for the old red cradle they lulled us in, when, fast to the strong moorings of a mother's love, we rocked on the hither shore of time? And who brought down 'the high chair,' that, in turn, had been the throne for a half dozen of us, "more or less," in turn, as we grew large enough to wield the weapons of table warfare? And who doesn't remember where that chair was tucked away in the garret aforesaid? Over behind the little wheel, that used to hum to the sweet song mother sang, years and years ago. And there's the distaff now, in the chink of a rafter. Do you remember the fine morning we went to the woods after it, and a bright, black-eyed boy, just turned of four, went too? There he sits now, on the opposite side of the table, 'in the old place,' with whiskers and a beard, and a voice that

would mock a nor'wester. That song! How we tried to get mother to sing the old song we loved so well!

"Boys, I can't sing," says the old lady; "my singing days are over." But she was over-persuaded, as she *always* was—for to which of us did she *ever* refuse a boon?—and how still it was when she began! Her voice was like a fast-failing fountain. She faltered as the old memories came thronging back upon her, and some how her glasses were a little dim, and she took them off to wipe them, and some how *all* our eyes were a little dim. God bless the old-fashioned mothers for ever! Who of us didn't say it then? Who of us does not breathe it now?

Well, then came the dinner—the Thanksgiving Dinner. How the pantry and the poultry had suffered to 'furnish forth' that marriage table—the marriage of the present and the past. It was the old table with the fall leaves, that had succeeded the little predecessor, when there were only father, mother, and one baby. The old strife "to set the chairs" up, is renewed. We are all seated—every chair filled. Filled? *Every* chair? Ah! but one, or two, or three. God grant it be *but* one! God grant it be not one! That one vacant place! All see it, all

remember. There is a pause ; a thought and a sigh for the absent, and the battle begins. How old reminiscences are revived ! and we all get, years nearer the purer realm of childhood and Heaven.

The afternoon wears away. Apples from the trees that were planted when each of us was born, are brought from the cellar, that aforetime was the very 'blue closet' of unimaginable terrors to the timid of us. And among them, is an apple from FRED's tree, and Fred is——No body can say it, so every body is silent.

One look at the rooms ; the "north room," and the "south room," and the "east room." Here are So - and - so's initials on the window - casing. They look dim, but maybe the dimness is nearer the eyes, after all.

The sleigh-bells (there used to be *snow* in old-fashioned Thanksgivings,) chime impatient at the door. Such bundling, and muffling, and good-bying—the old lady urging us, every one in turn, to keep warm, and tying our 'comforters'—*that's* the word—over again, and all that. Away we go, one after another, and the old homestead is quiet again. The branches of the old oak rustle audibly over the roof, in the No-

vember wind, and a family is again scattered over the world.

Maybe now, some 'mighty man,' like those of old, who has 'put away childish things,' and has forgotten he was ever born, may deem this puerile. Well, well, I have no more to say than this: we can all do much worse than to be children again, for

'Of such as *they* are, is the Kingdom of Heaven.'

The Old Garret.

SARCASTIC people are wont to say that poets dwell in garrets, and simple people believe it. And others, neither sarcastic nor simple, send them up aloft, among the rubbish, just because they do not know what to do with them down stairs and 'among folks,' and so they class them under the head of rubbish, and consign them to that grand receptacle of dilapidated 'has-beens,' and despised 'used-to-be's' — the old garret.

The garret is to the other apartments of the home-

stead what the adverb is to the pedagogue in parsing : every thing they do not know how to dispose of, is consigned to the list of adverbs. And it is for this precise reason that I love garrets ; because they *do* contain the relics of the old and the past—souvenirs of other and happier and simpler times.

They have come to build houses now-a-days without garrets. Impious innovation !

You man of bronze and ‘bearded like the pard,’ who would make people believe, if you could, that you never were ‘a toddlin wee thing ;’ that you never wore ‘a rifle-dress,’ or jingled a rattle-box with infinite delight ; that you never had a mother, and that she never became an old woman, and wore caps and spectacles, and maybe took snuff ; go home once more, after all these years of absence, all booted and whiskered, and six feet high as you are, and let us go up the stairs together, into that old-fashioned spacious garret, that extends from gable to gable, with its narrow, oval windows, with a spider-web of a sash, through which steals ‘a dim religious light’ upon a museum of things unnamable, that once figured below stairs, but were long since crowded out by the Vandal hand of these modern times.

The loose boards of the floor rattle somewhat as

they used to do—don't they?—when beneath your little pattering feet they clattered aforetime, when of a rainy day, 'mother,' wearied with many-tongued importunity, granted the 'Let us go up garret and play.' And play? Precious little of 'play' have you had since, I'll warrant, with your looks of dignity and your dreamings of ambition.

Here we are now in the midst of the garret. The old barrel—shall we rummage it? Old files of newspapers, dusty, yellow, a little tattered! 'Tis the '*Columbian Star*.' How familiar the type looks! How it reminds you of old times, when you looked over the edge of the counter, with the 'Letters or papers for father!' And these same *Stars*, just damp from the press, were carried one by one to the fire-side, and perused and preserved as they ought to be. Stars? Damp? Ah! many a star has set since then, and many a new-turfed heap grown dewy and damp with rain that fell not from the clouds.

Dive deeper into the barrel. There! A bundle—up it comes, in a cloud of dust. Old Almanacs, by all that is memorable! Almanacs, thin-leaved ledgers of time, going back to—let us see how far: 184—, 183—, 182—,—before our time—180—, when

our mothers were children. And the day-book—how blotted and blurred with many records and many tears!

There, you have hit your head against that beam. Time was, when you ran to and fro beneath it, but you are nearer to it now, by more than ‘the altitude of a copine.’ That beam is strown with forgotten papers of seeds for next year’s sowing; a distaff, with some few shreds of flax remaining, is thrust in a crevice of the rafters overhead; and tucked away close under the eaves is ‘the little wheel,’ that used to stand by the fire in times long gone. Its sweet, low song has ceased; and perhaps—perhaps she drew those flaxen threads—but never mind—you remember the line, don’t you?

‘Her wheel at rest, the matron charms no more.’

Well, let that pass. Do you see that little craft careened in that dark corner? It was red once; it was the only casket in the house once, and contained a mother’s jewels. The old red CRADLE, for all the world! And you occupied it once: ay, great as you are, it was your world once, and over it, the only horizon you beheld, bent the heaven of a mother’s

eyes, as you rocked in that little barque of love, on the hither shore of time—fast by a mother's love to a mother's heart.

And there, attached to two rafters, are the fragments of an untwisted rope. Do you remember it, and what it was for, and who fastened it there? 'Twas 'the children's swing.' *You* are here, indeed, but where are NELLY and CHARLEY? There hangs his little cap by that window, and there the little red frock she used to wear. A crown is resting on his cherub brow, and her robes are spotless in the better land.

A Half-Hour at the Window.

PRECIOUS little sunlight finds its way into the apartment where I write, these dark, December days, and precious that little is. It falls on the grove across the road, sometimes gilds the top of a leafless tree, and comes to me second-hand, 'a little the worse for wear,' as they say; but then welcome, very welcome, tarnished and tired as it is. Tired? To be sure. They talk of sunbeams playing and dancing; and so they may, and so they do, round sparkling fountains,

and over great green billows of foliage, but they do nothing of the sort in such times as this. Very sedate and well-behaved sunbeams are they indeed, about here !

Well, yesterday I was writing ; the shadows that room with me, lay here and there ; two or three were rolled up in the corner ; one stood behind the door, close to the wall ; another ill-mannered fellow extended itself on the table, and flung its unrustling skirt over the very sheet where I was writing. There are worse room-mates than shadows, after all. True, they leave their clothes lying about any where and every where ; but then they never wear boots, never make a noise, and are not given to gossiping.

As I intimated, a few lines ago, I was writing, when, all at once, a bright gleam flashed across the paper, and was gone. A rare visitor it was, and it's no wonder I wondered how it got here. I looked up : silent grove ; leafless tree ; nothing more. Resuming the pen, again it came. Pure and beautiful enough to have come right from heaven, it seemed. Was it a mirror swinging in the wanton wind somewhere, that flung that ray ? Or a radiant face, such as one sees, once or twice in a life-time—not more—in the middle of a morning dream ; that one always

thinks of, when he sees young and beautiful faces, and looks for, but never sees again—never?

It was a pleasant thing to muse on ; so I laid down the pen, and remembered—that's just the word—*remembered*. One shape melted into another, for Memory was playing 'i' the plighted clouds.'

Another gleam upon the paper, and at the instant, a WHITE WING glanced across the window, on its way down to the street. I looked out, and there, sure enough, amid the whirling snow, was a white dove.

Her errand was a beautiful one, no doubt ; seeking, perhaps, the wherewith to hush 'the three grains of corn, mother,' her little family were plaintively singing, some where aloft. Pretty soon, up she came again, out of the drifting snow, flinging another ray from that white wing as she went.

Wasn't it a beautiful emblem of a beautiful life ? Flinging gladness into sad hearts : glittering upon many a trinket of Memory and Yesterday ; beads of beauty, shed from a shivered necklace, rolled darkly away in the dust, that no hand may thread again, but His 'who doeth all things well.'

The world is full of wings ; every one broad enough to bear a sunbeam, and strong enough to fling it into some dim window, some gloomy room, some dark

heart, strewn with old hopes, and damp with new tears.

Bliss and blessing, life and light, are all winged. No matter for that : they shall be folded by and by, where there are no sunbeams to be carried, and there is no night at all.

I laid down the pen, and gazed musingly out into the winter, and there, just climbing the hill, was a young man, one of our neighbors, " up along," trudging through the snow, and carrying, beneath one arm, a cradle—a wicker cradle ; just such a cradle as makes one think of a little chicken in a basket, a little jewel in cotton-wool, or a little baby, or something else little and precious.

His quickened step, and a sort of semi-elation, semi-sheepishness in his looks, told a story for him he wouldn't have whispered for twelve dollars a month 'and found.' That brand-new cradle was for a brand-new tenant ; he didn't care who knew that ; and he was the father of it—nor that either ; and his wife was the mother of it—better than all. But then it was his first baby, her first baby, ' our ' first baby. That he didn't care so much about people's knowing. He would a little rather they should think he was used to it ; that the old cradle was worn out, or the

other babies tossed in a 'baby jumper,' or any thing but the precise truth, no matter what.

Innocent soul ! He little dreamed his secret was out ; ' plain as a pike-staff,' legible as good old Saxon, to every body that met him, and thought about it.

On he went, and I followed him home in thought, for the best reason in life—I couldn't help it. And there was the baby, sure enough, done up in dimity the whitest, trimmed with lace edging the daintiest ; little bits of pink shoes on its little bits of pink feet ; its eyes all afloat with the unwonted light, ' in a fine frenzy rolling,' a dimple on either cheek, a double chin, oh ! how fat—and such a head of hair ! To be sure, its nose is the least curve in the world puggish ; tell it to them if you are tired of life. To be sure, its voice is by no means the softest ; hint it, if you are shrived. But then it's a baby, in fact *the* baby, and ' a well-spring of pleasure ' it is, indeed.

And there's the mother, just pale enough to look ' interesting,' and that I-ask-no-more smile would beautify a face colored from the tents of Kedar ; but then she isn't homely ; she's handsome ; young mothers are always handsome—they can't help it.

And then it was to be a girl—of course it was ; and they had fixed upon a name to hail it by, the

moment it made its debut into breathdom. Many was the playful altercation they had had about that same name. She declared it should be called Polly, after his grandmother ; and he, that no name was so beautiful as Lucy—his wife's name, by-the-by ; but she conquered, of course ; and one pair of lips, at least, was puckered to utter a "Polly," when lo ! a muscular little Hercules of a fellow came plunging into being like a quarter-horse, and nameless as a young buffalo. What was to be done ? The nomens and cognomens of all the uncles, maternal, paternal, and doubtful, were catalogued and canvassed ; forefathers, and more too, were summoned ; but after all, just as any body could have told beforehand, she concluded, *nem. con.*,—we should like to see the man with a heart to refuse, as she lay there, her hair

‘Brown in the shadow, golden in the sun,’

flowing over the white pillow, and her soft eyes with a new look in them, turned upon her husband—she concluded, then, *nem. con.*, to call him—she never degraded the boy to a paltry ‘*it*’—to call him *Frank*. What'll you wager it wasn't the name of the father ?

Well, by this time they've got the little fellow in

his new cradle, and as the mother watches him, she weaves a sweet, beguiling song, of what shall be, 'in the good time coming,' when Frank gets to be five ; when he gets to be ten ; when he comes to be a man, and honors his mother, and 'lives long in the land that the Lord' shall give him.

Life is a great poem, and here, rendered into the plainest of prose, is the sweetest of its stanzas.

Night had set in, and still I sat by the window.

Some body was knocking at the door of a house over the way. At the instant, a green blind above, just opened a little way, and by the light I caught a glimpse of a pair of brilliant eyes, and a flutter of something white, and a bird-toned voice softly said, 'Who's there?' 'It's me,' was the brief response. The eye and the flutter disappeared from the window, like stars in a cloud, and I fancied I could hear the pattering of two little feet upon the stairs, winged with welcome.

It was a trifle ; it all happened in an instant, but it haunted me for an hour—'It's me !' Amid the darkness and storm, those words fell upon the quick ear aloft, and met a glad response.

'It's me !' and who was 'me ?' The pride of a heart's life, no doubt ; the tree a vine was clinging

to ; the 'defender of the faithful,' in the best sense of the-term.

'It's me !' Many there are who would give half their hearts, and more than half the hopes in them, for one such recognition in this 'wide, wide world.' At the Post Office, abroad, in the wide world, he was known as A. B. C., Esq., but on that threshold, and within those walls, 'it's me,' and nothing more ; and what more *is* there, one would love to be ?

Few of all the hearts that beat so wildly, warmly, sadly, slowly, but can recognize a true soul amid the darkness of the world, in that simple but eloquent 'it's me.' As if he had said—

'Now I am nothing to all the world,
For I'm all the world to thee.'

The clock in the distant village strikes 'ten ;' the clouds have cleared away, one after another ; the frost twinkles through the air ; the snow crackles under the feet of the brisk pedestrian ; the sleigh-runners grate, as they slowly surmount the hill ; some overburdened limb in the woods comes crashing down in the silence ; there is a drowsy chime of bells beyond the Lake ; the landscape is as cold and beautiful and dumb as a Daguerreotype.

How strangely the moon lights up the past ; how
one can see far-off graves by its gleam ; how it shines
through the years that are gone ; how the trinkets of
memory glitter, when its ray is let in to the heart ;
how it reveals

‘the tideless shore,
Where rests the wreck of *Heretofore*!’

I.

All Heaven is anchored off the world ; and every, every
where,
The silver surges of the moon make music through the air ;
As the stars revealed by night, as the dew-drops by the stars,
So the bosom’s wordless wealth, by the moon-beam’s misty
bars.
Oh ! sunlight for the world of things, but moonlight for the
heart !
From out the dreamy shadows, how the forms of beauty
start !

II.

How they throng the halls of Thought ! there an ANGEL-ONE
appears ;
Though I cannot see her clearly by moonlight, and for tears,
I’d know that foot-fall *any* where, as light as summer-rain,
For it sets my pulses playing, as none can do again.

III.

Ah ! Thou art there, my Cynosure ! I *know* those eyes are
thine ;
No other pair would ever turn so lovingly to mine :
And now, a billow of green turf swells breathless o’er her
rest,
As if it feared to wake the babe that slumbers on her breast ;

IV.

The bough was bent to breaking, as the blast went sweep-
ing by,
But the nameless bud of beauty was wafted to the sky :
And thou, fair moon ! art shining on, in all thy glory yet,
As if upon no fairer brow, no paler seal were set.

V.

The purling azure ever parts in music round thy prow ;
As we together saw thee then, so I behold thee now.
And yet, methinks, thy deck grows dim with gray and
gathered years ;
Not so, not so ! untouched by time ! 'Tis nothing but these
tears.

VI.

I wonder not the stars are out, to see thee riding by,
And not a breath to break the blue of all that blessed sky :
There's just one cloud in all that dome of God's own starry
thought—
One little cloud of Zephyr's fleet, left floating there, forgot.

VII.

Though evening's sun did gild it with glories rich and rare,
Yet well might Zephyr sigh again, that left that cloudbud
there ;
For like a banner weirdly wove in wild Campania's loom,
That cloudbud's volume swells aloft, as dark and deep as
doom.

VIII.

Not all thy glory, gentle Moon ! can turn that gloom to gold,
Nor all thy silver lure a star to light a single fold.
Good night, fair Moon !—good night again, pale captive to
the cloud ;

I've seen a *dearer* light than thou, extinguished by the
shroud.
That cloud is edged with silver now; its gloom is webbed
with gold;
The stars shine through it every where—a pearl in every
fold!

O u r P a p e r .

RUSH has just come in with the paper—*our* paper, damp from the press. I love a newspaper—a new newspaper, and like to be the first to open it. The articles, some how, seem fresher, and wittier, and wiser, before ‘the small folio’ rustles like husks; when it comes open silently, and you can fold it precisely as you wish, and it *stays* folded without murmuring. The smell of damp paper and good ink—not musty ink—makes one fancy it was printed for his particular perusal, and no body’s else.

So another candle is placed upon the stand, the arm-chair is wheeled boldly round in front of the fire, two ‘letters’ are snuffed from the candles, the paper is opened, and I begin to—think.

The Press! Orators have lauded, poets sung, but it has lost none of its wonder; it is still a marvel

and a mystery. Think of it ! That a few quiverings of the empty air can float a thought or a feeling from mind to mind ; that the blue breakers can throw up, as it were into the midst of a heart, a jewel of a hope, or fling a star of truth from the breast of a billow, into some darkened intellect, is quite strange enough for a fairy tale, and yet quite true enough for a sermon. But that the footprints of thought can be made visible upon the snowy page—that they may be traced and retraced, when the Thinker is dead, and all but ‘the enduring produce’ of his mind, a dream—*this* is more wonderful still. The thought that one has cherished in his bosom, until it bears his own mental image, is stamped upon the wing of the newspaper, or the page of the volume, as it flutters from the press, and that thought finds access and hearing, where the man himself cannot venture. Perhaps he is awkward, deformed, a stammerer, and a subject of ridicule ; perhaps his garb is coarse, and well-worn and patched ; but there stands his Thought, in the drawing room, the hall, representative of the better part of him—graceful, elegant, arrayed in rich old Saxon, welcomed, listened to, admired every where. Perhaps he has never gone beyond the blue verge of vision, whereof his cradle was the centre ;

but that *thought* of his, has been borne along earth's great rivers on panting steamers, and over God's great clearings by locomotives; even the lightnings have forgotten their thunders, and whispered the accents of his thought, as they flickered along the wire, from mart to hamlet, from hamlet to mart again. Perhaps he dies, and the swelling turf subsides above him like a weary wave, leaving no trace of his resting place, but that thought lives on. The paper is old and torn; it wears the yellow livery of Time; Time has made it his menial; but some eye shall see it when he is dead; some memory treasure, and some mind admire. Like the bird that went forth from the ark, it is returnless; the music of its wing is heard, when the knell for the palsied hand that sent it out, has died upon the air: it is immortal. Perhaps some nobler mind has divested it of its first array, and clothed it in cloth of gold, and transfigured and glorified, it still survives, but the same Thought still.

Mighty engine, is that Press, against time. The rattle of its machinery seems to me but the first audible footfall of thought, on its sublime out-going into the world; its mission unended, till the pitcher is broken at the last fountain of human thought, 'the

dust returning to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it.'

Why, by the power of the Press, the steps of mortality itself are staid, and full-orbed intellects, at the word of this Joshua of iron, stand still, and the prayer of Telamon's mighty son, 'for light,' is answered.

I do not wonder that the impression of the first type, upon the printed page, was crimson. It was but the flushing of a new morning, that has dawned upon the intellectual world. Oh ! in that black, unseemly engine, lies the world's great strength, and Time's most formidable foe.

LUCY, who is trying to 'pick up' a refractory stitch, breaks in upon my train of thought, just here, with, 'Any body married or dead ?' Just like a woman !

One death ! Little LOUISE L——.

The ancients used to fancy the fountain of Arethusa could change age into immortal youth and beauty ; and though the divinities of the fountain, the river and the forest, have passed away, there is something attractive in the fancy, and there is hardly one who would not rear it into a faith if he could.

The fountain of Arethusa may, long ago, have intermitted, but the *charm* it used to wear, like Hope, is lingering still.

There *are* those who daily find that fountain, and are ever young ; the beings that pass away in infancy ; that are enshrined in memory ; that smile on us with their gentle eyes, from away through the distant years ; that never grow old, but remain children still, though the cradle that rocked, and the roof that sheltered, and the bosom that pillowed them, have mouldered away.

How could I help thinking so, when I read the brief record that a little being who had filled, we know, a large place in more hearts than one, had turned cherub ? And I could not help thinking, too, that it is hardly a bereavement, after all, that one of all our treasures should grow immortal and changeless ; one, of all our loves, should triumph over time, and shine like a star, amid the clouds of the world, with a constant and beautiful light.

Oh ! many a LOUISE, to-day, is linking earth to heaven ; and who would make the number less ? Without a tear, they are awaiting us just beyond the azure ; ever young—ever the children we laid them

down—accepted candidates for the Kingdom of Heaven.

‘There is no fold, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there ;
There is no fireside, howsoe’er defended,
But hath one vacant chair.’

Here in the corner—the *poet’s* corner, (why is he always set in the corner, like a naughty boy—can any body tell?)—are two or three stanzas in little type.

They describe the bright spring days as having come, and the cottage door set open wide, and the mother sewing within the lonely room, and there being nothing to delay her sewing on, because

‘The little hindering thing has gone.’

It may not so impress you, perhaps, but there is to me, in that ‘little hindering thing,’ something wonderfully suggestive. How it conjures up the memory of that little voice, those little pattering feet, those thousand calls from sleep to sleep again, for this and that, so weaving up a mother’s life of love, with that little being’s destiny.

“Little hindering thing,” indeed! The world

were better to-day, had there been more things to hinder it from growing old—from forgetting the past.

THERE is a queer advertisement, just beneath the brief announcement of sweet Louise' translation ; and it reads thus :

SPIRIT RAPPINGS.—Communications with the Spirit Land, 25 cents.

Haven't we fallen upon wonderful times ? Postage to Heaven only twenty-five cents ! No ferry on the Jordan ; no line of telegraph beyond it ; no contract for carrying the mail that we can read of ; and yet, for a paltry quarter, here we have 'the latest advices' from Hades ! If it were true—if it were not a sacrilegious humbug—there certainly would be balm and beauty in it. The Rachels of our day could 'send a wish and a thought' after the lispers whom 'the Gods loved,' and the Angel in charge, would transmit a line or two, in behalf of the little Marys and Charleys 'gone on before.' Fatherless sons could take counsel of departed sires, and sainted mothers recall, in spirit whispers, their errant children.

Husbands could waft words of love to the dear ones that wandered awhile with them, in disguise ; widows *could* — if they *would*, for widows are ‘wonderfully sustained,’ some how, ‘in the general.’ The lover’s dream, and the poet’s song, would thus be realized, and many a welcoming, many a warning voice would be wafted across the dark river ; white hands would beckon, through the night, to the waiting this side the water ; happy would he be, who had *some* friend beyond the Jordan, that the tear of parting here, might brighten in the smile of meeting there. The poor washerwoman would consecrate, each week, a hard-earned quarter, to hear from little NELLY, whose spotless garments were ‘washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb ;’ and the appalling waste of nothingness ’twixt this world and that, would be bridged for ever.

‘ARRIVAL from California ! A million of gold-dust ! Great news from the mines !’ And so it runs on, in great grenadiers of letters, a regiment of exclamation points bringing up the rear. And so it goes, through three mortal columns.

‘Gold, gold, gold, gold!
Bright and yellow, hard and cold;
Molten, graven, hammered and rolled,
Heavy to get, but light to hold.’

And what a list of returned wanderers ! I glance rapidly down the A's, the B's, the C's and the D's, till here are the S's, but there is no SILAS. SILAS has not come. Wonder if he knows they are waiting for him here—a few, a dozen or so ; for he must have found one truth in the Placers : that a man is passing rich who can number friends enough for a jury. Wonder if he knows that some, two or three or so—he is rich, indeed, who can lose two or three and not be bankrupt !—have wearied of waiting, and ‘wrapped the drapery of the couch around them ?’

In the midst of the gathering of the clans, *en route* for the land of gold, the air full of farewells to the departing, and hundreds of homes made tearful and lonely, it is gratifying to hear the cheerful tones of greeting, breaking in upon the saddened and subdued voices of ‘the left behind ;’ to see faces kindled with the cloudless light of returning joy. Such a sight, and such sounds, I witnessed and heard upon the cars of the Southern Michigan Road, a day or two since. Just in front of me, sat a group that would make a

picture for a painter. The central figure was a woman, a wife and a mother. She was deeply, calmly happy. Around her were three children: a fine, bright-eyed boy of some twelve years, a girl of seven or eight, and a round-faced, chubby little creature of golden four. Above them all, towered the form of the husband and father. I know he had been absent from home for a long time—that he had just rejoined his family. One moment he drew the boy to him, apparently unconscious of the movement; the next, he was looking at the little one, evidently almost a stranger to him, while the round face was turned up inquiringly to the bearded stranger; and the next, he had a word for his wife and a glance for his daughter, and another tightening of his arm round the eldest hope of his house.

It was a beautiful picture; more beautiful, indeed, than ever came from the airy chambers of a prince of the pencil.

What cared he, what thought he, that the eyes of strangers were upon him? That they could read his story 'like a book?' That he had been to California, that he had been successful; that he had just returned; that he was happy; that *they* were happy; there was no mistaking it.

May there be many such returns, and greetings, and homes, in that silver time, 'by and by,' when they all get home, and the unused chairs are brought out again, and every place at the old family table is filled, and the 'leaf' that has hung so long useless by that table's side, is raised once more.

All get home! *Will* they all return? *Will* those places all be occupied again? Knells sound softly, sadly, from out the years to come, and dimly look those days through mists of tears. But there shall be gladness too, as sometimes we see, in summer, in the distant fields, and along the slopes of hills, the sunlight brightly resting, while all around us is mantled in shadow. The sound of bridal bells, merry bells, and merry voices, comes to us from the future, blended with the sigh and the knell, and making the music of this life of ours.

'EXHIBITION in our school, to-morrow evening!'

'Exhibition!' Isn't that a word to conjure with? Doesn't it summon up 'the days that are no more?'

Those first kindlings of emulation; those tear-blotted compositions; those first mysteries of Euclid; those ludicrous assays in the making of Latin; the

teacher's dreaded frown, and his no less coveted smile ; those Wednesday afternoons, when, with clean collars and shining faces, we were all 'the orators of the day;' those tremblings and palpitations before it became 'our turn,' and the flush when the dread artillery of eyes, from the encouraging look of the teacher to the roguish glances of the gleeful girls was levelled at us ;—all roguish but one, and that one—who would not acquit himself well in her eyes ?—those strolls on Saturday ; those first lessons we took in good old Isaac Walton's gentle art, in the little creeks that glittered like skeins of silver from the hills ; those 'black-berryings' in summer and snowy battles in winter ; and, more than all, those hurried pressures of hands, and, now and then, of *lips* maybe, in moonlight strolls, and sleighing parties, and the like ; those fervent, though evanescent attachments that so develop our emotive nature, and after long years of separation and forgetfulness, linger round the heart, like the murmur of its ocean home in the sea-shell's tinted hall ; these, all these, rush on the thought, and make us sigh for those halcyon days when

'We used to think the forest tops
Were close against the sky!'

And there was the dread ordeal of examination, and the last night's exhibition, and the crowded hall, and the lights that danced before our eyes, as if keeping time with our hopes and hearts—in Memory's eyes they are dancing yet! Then, the excitement over, the day of parting came; all was hurry and bustle; trunks were packed, book-shelves tenantless, drawers emptied. There goes the horn! and the yellow, mud-bespattered coach comes rocking up the gravelled walk before the door.

One after another, the little party are seated; good-byes are exchanged; handkerchiefs waved from windows and doors, by many a fair little hand; tears are brushed hastily away; a twinge at the heart-strings—crack! goes the driver's whip, and away rolls a part of our little world. Another vehicle, and another, in turn receive their precious freight. Farewells grow fainter, the utterance is choked, smiles are mockery; these are parting, to meet no more within those pleasant shades—perhaps no more for ever. Their last day at school has come, and has brought, alas! what they little fancied—tears. They linger longer. All is ready; the bustle has subsided, and they two are alone. They go to take one last look at the old room; they had taken two before;

they pass into the chapel, so silent, like a tomb, on to their old familiar seat ; a forgotten book lies open upon it, they catch the name of its owner, a common friend who had left to return no more.

Tears will not be suppressed ; they struggle up ; and who would stay them ? They turn away ; they part, but not without renewed assurances of remembrance, of correspondence, and of hope that they shall meet ; ‘meet in happier times,’ they say. Mistaken pair ! there *are* no happier times this side of Heaven !

AND here is that monthly roll-call—the ‘LETTER LIST.’

Some of those, no doubt, whose names swell that list, are dead. Some of them were watching from beds of pain, this morning’s light, as it stole timidly through the half-curtained window of the invalid’s melancholy room. Some of them have gone ‘on their winding way’ over the plains.

In that column are letters from mothers to children, wives to husbands, lovers to lovers. Some of them bear black seals, and they who unseal them, will unseal too, a fountain of tears. Some of them

have been waited for, and wept for, and asked for, till hearts grew sick with 'hope deferred,' and now they have come, at last, and the question is, where are the waiters and weepers?

What episodes of human life do those letters contain! How much of love and hate, of wit and sentiment, joy and grief! How many spirits for many a day will take their color from a five minutes' reading! Stern Impatience, timid Love, and straightforward Business jostle and crowd around the Delivery! There is poetry there, in those little square, triangular, oblong, blue, white, and yellow missives, and history and biography and philosophy. Sermons and songs are turned out from the same leathern receptacles.

The breaking of a heart-string costs five cents; the answer of love only half a dime. Joy and grief are inventoried alike in this strange schedule of human sorrowings and hopes.

'LAST but not least,' the 'LEADER.' Poor Editor! He *has* none. I can see him as he ponders and ponders. 'Is the country safe?' Then there is nothing to be written on 'the state of the nation.' Has any

great man fallen with the sound of a great tree in the forest? No, and Heaven forbid! Has any great man been born? Alas! great men are *not* born, now-a-days, and if they were, what horoscope have Editors, wherewith to divine it?

Does the tempest of political conflict gather? The sky is as clear as the great bell of Moscow. True, Revolutions are ripening in Europe, but the harvest-song is not yet written. True, the West is a great country, Americans a great people, but these truths 'have served their time' as leaders, and must needs rest.

All legitimate themes are exhausted—the mails bring that dread of the fraternity, 'nothing new,' and the ink dries upon the waiting pen.

Were it not the second day of January, he might talk of New Year, and express his wishes for the prosperity of his patrons 'and the rest of mankind;' but that will not do. Time, like daily papers, requires but twenty-four hours to be old, and every body is moving as steadily on to-day, as if there had not been a 'New Year' in a half century.

Gloster offered a kingdom for a horse. He sympathizes with him, for he wants "*a leader.*" He lays down the pen, looks listlessly out at the window,

and lo ! a leader—one of the *world's* leaders, and in arms ! A man, 'bearded like the pard,' is bearing along the street, a bit of a boy, be-plumed, be-curved, be-plaided, and black-eyed, the man's heart—the better part of it—personified—himself as he was—himself as he *ought* to be.

That man ! why a regiment could not drive him, but that boy can guide him. Ah ! he's a leader indeed. He fills that man's heart to-day—that *fac-simile* of his hope, is in all his present, and he has no future without him.

The world is filled with such leaders, 'set' in types of innocence and beauty, 'displayed' in almost every home, and 'illustrated' by almost every hearth-light. Worthy are they of the 'small caps' they wear. For the nonce, they are *his* leader. God bless the leaders !

'THE CRYSTAL PALACE. — Receipts — wonders — thousands'—so runs the column.

Temples, a many have been built ; wreathed Corinthian and solemn Gothic ; simple as the altar of Eden's second son ; ornate as the Pantheon of the Greek ; to Divinities supernal, infernal, and 'mixed ;'

but only two, and those of Crystal, to the mind-directed HAND. True, the 'Hundred-handed' had altars and offerings, but then BRIAREUS was headless. True, HERCULES was a god of muscles, and had a hand of his own, but then there was always a *club* in it; it was a rude hand, with a Savage for an owner. True, VULCAN was a fellow of some sinew but his corded arm was always red with the thunderbolts he was shaping. True, APOLLO fingered the harp now and then, and twanged the silver bow, but then, the one he was heir to, and the other he found. Not a divinity of them all, could have made either of them, Mythology 'to the contrary notwithstanding.' The fact is, that the Apotheosis of the Hand had not taken place in those days. Not a hand of them all could have knocked at the closed windows of the human soul, and those curtains be withdrawn at the signal; not an arm of them all could have been extended, and the fallen 'Daughters of Music' be lifted from the dumb dust, into a world trembling with harmony.

And this PALACE OF GLASS—what is it but a splendid *Retina*, whereon are stereotyped myriad passages from the eloquent utterances of the human hand? Sweetest song could not wake the sleepers in

the tombs of Paria ; but there, around them, within those walls of crystal, they stand forth in the day ; death without its moulder, life without its motion, only waiting the whisper of Omnipotence to breathe, and come down from their pedestals, and utter an IONIC welcome to the throng. The HAND had rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and unravelled with the graver the marble shrouds, and gently beat upon the breast till it started an echo within, and the muscles rounded anew, and the bosom was like a billow, and the lips parted, and the WORLD listened with their eyes.

Loftiest eloquence—nay, a Prophet's hallowed lips, could not bid the temple-veil of Heaven be rent, that the great fabric woven in the loom of God should obey, and swing slowly aside. But there, about them, are strewn Telescopes, those lidless, tearless, sleepless Eyes, the HAND has burnished and brought near that dim curtain, and *looked through* the loosely-woven threads, sparkling out with stars, like dewdrops upon the spider's web, and seen the burning torches that blaze round the base of the Throne ; seen and lived.

And so, every where beneath that dome, from the tapestry, fragrant with its budded flowers, and the

Dacca lace of India, the 'woven air' of the Orient, to the magic powder that quickens the dull pulses of Mother Earth into glowing thoughts of summer, and the thing that champs the steel as the fawn crops the roses, are evidences of the eloquence of the Hand — that true KALEIDOSCOPE of the world, wherein fragments the humblest, and material the paltriest, become at every motion, new forms of beauty, new combinations of power, new aids for man, in this HOLY ALLIANCE of the Head, the Heart, and the Hand.

'ANOTHER COMET.' So our Editor has, at last, discovered a Comet in the—*newspapers*, and treats his readers to a dessert of horrors possible and probable, *provided*, as the lawyers say, the illustrious stranger ungallantly comes in collision with our dear, dusky Mother.

What these hirsute foreigners are doing in our of-fing, no body precisely, and precisely no body, knows, inasmuch as they never send their papers ashore, nor take a pilot on board, nor run up a flag, nor fire a salute, nor any thing else usual upon the high seas.

Our Sun with his glorious retinue, is moving among the starry isles, in this great Archipelago of God,

towards the dim north-west. And the Sun is a King, and the Planets are his train. And who knows that these comets are not his *couriers*, sent out along the great highway—sent out, some of them, before we were born; some of them when time began—returning now and then, with the tidings, ‘The way is clear! Move on!’ And so he *does* move sublimely on, in an orbit, a fragment of whose arc, no human intellect has ever grasped.

Wandering they may be, but ‘not lost,’ for their routes and times—are they not all recorded in the books of the Admiralty of high Heaven? Then, here’s to

The New Craft in the Offing.

’Twas a beautiful night on a beautiful deep,
And the man at the helm had just fallen asleep,
And the watch of the deck, with his head on his breast,
Was beginning to dream that *another’s* it pressed,
When the look-out aloft cried, ‘A sail! ho! a sail!’
And the question and answer went rattling like hail:
‘A sail! ho! a sail!’ ‘Where away?’ ‘No’th-no’t-west?’
‘Make her out?’ ‘No, your honor!’ The din drowned the
rest.

There, indeed, is the stranger, the first in these seas,
Yet she drives boldly on, in the teeth of the breeze.
Now her bows to the breakers she steadily turns:
Oh! how brightly the light of her binnacle burns!
Not a signal for SATURN this ROVER has given,
No salute for our VENUS, the flag-star of heaven;

Not a rag or a ribbon adorning her spars,
She has saucily sailed by 'the red planet MARS;
She has 'doubled,' triumphant, the Cape of the SUN,
And the sentinel stars, without firing a gun!
Now, a flag at the fore and the mizzen unfurled,
She is bearing right gallantly down on the world!
'Helm a-port!' 'Show a light! She will run us aground!'
'Fire a gun!' 'Bring her to!' 'Sail a-hoy! Whither
bound?'

'Avast there! ye lubbers! Leave the rudder alone:
'Tis a craft 'in commission'—the Admiral's own;
And she sails with sealed orders, unopened as yet,
Though her anchors she weighed before Lucifer set!
Ah! she sails by a chart no draughtsman could make,
Where each cloud that can trail, and each wave that can
break;
Where each planet is cruising, each star is at rest,
With its anchor 'let go' in the blue of the blest;
Where that sparkling flotilla, the Asteroids, lie,
Where the scarf of red Morning is flung on the sky;
Where the breath of the sparrow is staining the air—
On the chart that she bears, you will find them all there!
Let her pass on in peace to the port whence she came,
With her trackings of fire, and her streamers of flame!

BUT there is a brace of 'coffins' in the candles;
the back-stick has fallen to pieces; the frost is creep-
ing up the window-panes; the two hands of the
clock are pointing the way to Heaven; the paper has
rustled down to my feet; so—GOOD NIGHT!

Riding on a Rail.

THE other day I shot into town, on the Michigan Southern Railway Train. The engine was well-named—FLYING CLOUD ; for a flying cloud it was, scudding before the magical tempest, through the woods and round the sweeping shores of old Michigan.

And a wonderful thing is that Engine, when we think of it ; the emblem and exponent of the hour ; the thing of iron and of fire ; with a banner of light and an eye like a star ; with sinews of brass and steel ; and breathings of flame. It is impatient to go forth to battle. It glides upon those two iron bars, the noblest couplet of the age, from winter to summer ; from day to night ; from morning to evening.

It gives the river a holiday, and drives on regardless of its flow ; it plunges like a strand of thunder through the mountain gorge ; it pants around the wide world. Its shafts glitter in the mines ; its voice is heard in the shops ; its banner is every where. It has forced its way to the far hamlets in the quiet

vales, and they have felt the thrill and the jar of the great world.

Those quiet, little nestling-places where we were born, are fast disappearing. The hill, where the long summer afternoons and we used to lie, and while they gilded the clouds that went floating by, we glorified them—that hill has been graded down, and the cars now thunder along, where breezes swept before.

The grove, where first we learned to build our castles in air, where every mossy tree had a name and a memory, some Vandal hand has felled to feed the hungry Engine.

Sublunary creation goes drifting by at thirty miles an hour, and they are crowding away the past, with its memories and its hallowed spots, its homes, its altars, and its groves, to make room for the future, that comes thundering on by steam.

Japhet passed a life in search of his father; the old world sought a new route to the Indies; modern science is groping 'mid blinding snows and howling winters, for a northwest passage, and by and by, some man, wiser than Zimmerman, will be seeking a place whose echoes were never wakened by the snort of steam; that was never trenched with a canal, nor

webbed with a Telegraph—shall seek, but never find, till that house, the Grave-digger tells of, shall open to receive him.

Iron and Fire are achieving new triumphs, every day, over those twin foes of man, Time and Space.

Triumphs? You need not look for them where men are binding broad continents with clampings of iron. You can find them in the veriest trifles. Here now, they tell us, a bunch of flowers was sent from New-York in an exhausted case, to the World's Fair in London, and after a lapse of three months, were as beautiful as when they bloomed in the Eden of the West. This statement met your eyes; you passed it over, forgot it. But here is the same fact, in another expression: Time challenged man to preserve even the *flowers* unwithered, and from month to month, they had faded and faded, in mockery of human power. It was even deemed a wonder when an American lady in London decked her hair with leaves flushed with the sunset of the year, in the forests of the new World—*withered* leaves, and nothing more. Space interposed his waste of waters, and said, remove those flowers from their parent stems, and if Time does not wither them at first, yet you shall bear them to their destination, dead flowers at last. Man ac-

cepted that challenge, and he has come off victor. Here now is a Bouquet sent from the new world to the old—nothing more—and yet how many hours of thought, and years of toil, were necessary that it might be done. How the chemist sought to unweave the blue robe of air; how the philosopher proved it an ethereal sea, and manned the pumps in its clear depths, and created a vacuum, Nature's old abhorrence. How the miner delved, the furnace glowed, the blacksmith wrought, until that human engine waved round the steamer's wheels with its iron wand. And all this, before that floral gem plucked from the bosom of the New World, all warm and fragrant with her breath, could bloom awhile in the Crystal Palace of the British Isles. Oh! this is a trifle indeed, but it reveals the tide and turn of the battle.

It is wonderful how that hissing, panting, shrieking thing of iron, bears us all, not only away from home, but away from childhood, memory, and yesterday.

The past is left behind, and forgotten, and blushed for; but what of that? The past is dead; 'Let the dead past bury its dead.' Homes are desecrated, deserted, destroyed; but what of that? They were humble and old—there are better to come. Many a sweet flower of memory and affection is trampled and

crushed beneath the iron heels and hurrying feet of an iron age ; but what are flowers, but the fancy-work of Nature's holidays ? Childhood with its sweet borderings of morning, is stricken from the calendar ; but what of that ? Childhood, sweet pause, as it is, upon the threshold of life, with its foolish memories of fond mothers and doting fathers, and old songs, and the trees that bore our names, and the rooms where we were cradled, and the cots where we were born, and our little world within the horizon's azure ring : what are these to us ? The trees are withered and felled ; the roof-tree is mossy, and humble and old ; the songs are mute like ' the harp in Tara's halls ; ' and the mothers, God grant they all are not dead ! That ' good time coming ' must have been sung, at last, to the brink of being born. What have we to do with trifles such as these ? We are men and women, warriors all ; we are practical people, wise people, we of this age, in the midst of the battle ; *we* have put away flowers, and fancies, and memories, and the past, with the trinkets—the rattle and the straw that pleased us then—among the idle rubbish of the brain. We are children no more. And we have come out, like the Trojan Prince from

burning Troy, but unlike him, we have left our 'household gods' behind us.

A watch-word is abroad. It has passed from leader to leader, and down and along the rank and file of the world. The world ! And what a brigade the world makes ! Here is no paltry centurion's command, but nations by battalions, generations by squadrons. How sublimely they are moving ! Away on in the van, 'is

'Bright Improvement on the car of Time.'

I see the Lion of England, and the Lilies of France, and the Stork of old Holland, and the Eagle of Columbia, blazoned upon their banners, and waving in the full noon of the age. One after another, tribes and tongues from under the whole Heaven, have fallen into line. The turbaned Turk has left his ottoman ; the islands of the sea, with their gentle children, have taken up the march ; the intermitting heart of old Europe, beats a salute, like the sound of a stream in an ancient cave, as the world goes by, and even 'the drowsy East' has looked out from its windows of sunrise. On they move to the magic of that word 'Progress.' There is no Rubicon, but the Cæsars are not extinct. Scouts boldly plunge into the shadows of the Future, take captive mornings

yet to be, and return with them to the advance guard of this mighty armament, and so it is, that in these days, 'other morns have risen upon mid-noons.'

'Close up!' 'Close up!' rings along the nations. I seem to hear it now, as in all languages and lands, the word is speeding on. The sturdy Saxon utters it, and its echo rings like 'England's morning drum-beat' round the world. The Greek amid his fallen temples, catches and prolongs it; from tongue to tongue, till it swells like a sigh, from the empty, dusty cradle of old Egypt. On moves the column, through the web of years, like the shuttle in the hand of the weaver.

It was not a trumpet that thus rallied the world, but the shrill whistle of that iron Boatswain, the Steam Engine.

And there it stands, at once the creation and the rival of the hand; that has passed on with its freight of humanity, beyond the uttermost station; that, with soulless sinew, makes Mechanic Man a supernumerary; even he, who 'laid hands' upon stubborn iron, polished steel and gleaming brass, till, as with 'touch ethereal,' the metal caught the 'cunning' of the fingers. The Steam Engine is a monster. He tortures the wave into energy and strength; he breathes out

its shrieking spirit in a cloud, and man, the being with the hand, stands appalled in the presence of the genius he has conjured. Next comes the CALORIC ENGINE, a thing like the other, dug from the mine, and shaped by the altar-light of forges, but no monster—not *it*; for it presses hard towards humanity's self. It has lungs of iron, indeed, and no delicate leaves of red life; but then it is the *calm, blue air* we breathe, that fills its ponderous cylinders; it is nearer *human* than its panting predecessor, and who shall say, not a more formidable rival?

Winter Nights.

UGH! What a night last night was, to be sure—the waltz of the wind and the drifts.

A huge snow-bank of a cloud lay along the west at sunset—an aerial Onalaska—and white, frosty puffs came out of a clear, blue cleft in the keen north-east.

That wind! Didn't it love snow, and hadn't it queer ways of its own? Now it came from beyond the wood, sighing and sobbing like a penitent. Then

it struck the poor, dumb, leafless trees, till they creaked and groaned like a forest of masts in a storm ; but it was tuning up the mighty harp for an Anthem—nothing more. And there's the deep, pedal bass for you : feathery pines, stubborn oaks, swaying elms and whispering hemlocks, all touched into a grand harmony, by the hand of a master.

Then it whistled through the orchard, like the whirl of a lash ; then it moaned down in the valley ; then it roared and rumbled over the chimney-tops, and the little, timid flames lay flat upon the half-burned wood, till it passed ; then it tried the doors and rattled the windows, and shook the curtains, and shrieked round the corners like a fiend, and moaned over the threshold like a foundling, and piped through the key-hole like a boatswain ; then it leaped up like a giant, and tossed the old butternut like a fury, and died down again like an infant.

Love the snow ? Indeed it did ! It bundled it in fence-corners, to see how it would look, and heaped it in the highway, and took it up, and carried it a little farther, and down it went in a lull. In an instant it flew with it over the top of the house, and waltzed away with it over the corn-field, and whirled it up against the old barn, and sifted it through on to the

hay, and flung it over the wood-pile, and drifted it up on to the window-sills. And the hovels it crept into, and the secrets it found out, that the neighbors never knew ! It rustled a bed, and discovered it was nothing but straw. It drifted down upon a hearth, and the ashes mocked it, so cold and white were they. There was no fire there ! And it found an infant asleep upon its mother's breast, by the road-side, and the mother was dead ; and it froze the tear upon the baby's cheek, that it should not fall to the earth, and it whirled a wreath of snow over the twain, and it went sighing on its way, like one who would not be comforted.

And what a time it had in the grave-yard, furrowing it all over with white billows, filling up the hollows, and tumbling this way and that, and rocking the willows, and swinging in the old maples. Then up it went, and waked the old church-bell from its slumbers, till there came out of the belfry a solemn tone, that blended with the blast as it swept by. Back to the house again, and how it shrieked through the garret, and rattled the loose boards upon the gables, and puffed out the smoke in the fire-place, and died meekly away, and sung softly through the crevices, and was still.

Then it swept out of the "Oak opening," on to the Prairie, and flung to a blind, where one lay languishing, and fanned an ember that had fallen into a crevice of the floor, and closed a door that had stood ajar, lest some body might see, and blew it up into a brave flame, and flared it this way and that, and went crashing on, 'into the heavy timber,' and was gone.

How they heaped up the fire, and drew out the glowing coals from beneath the fore-stick, and shook out the folds of the curtains before the windows, and snuffed the candles anew, and made it as cheerful as they could. Festoons of dried pumpkin adorned the ceiling ; skeins of yarn decorated the window-frames ; a bowl of red-cheeked apples, and a pitcher of cider, stood on the hearth in one corner ; the hired man was asleep in the other ; the wee ones were cracking butternuts, mother was knitting—she's *always* knitting—and father was dozing over 'the state of the nation' as set forth in the '*Republican Times*.' One of the boys was telling an incident of the day : the hunters had been out, and the music of the hounds had been ringing all day through the woods. They had started a hapless deer, and hard-pressed by the dogs, panting and wearied, it was rushing by, where the hired man had just felled a tree, when, quick as

thought, it turned, tumbled breathless at his feet, and with a mute eloquence that passes speech, it claimed his protection. The baying of the hounds came nearer and nearer—there it lay, supplicating and helpless. ‘And what did JOE do, do you think,’ asked the young narrator, growing earnest with indignation—‘why, he just killed it with his axe! He offered me a haunch, if I would bring it home. Wonder if he thought I’d touch it. Such a fellow would rob his own father!’

MACK, curled up on the hearth, was propounding venerable riddles, the heir-looms of childhood, to a weather-bound school-mate; such as ‘round the house and round the house, and *pop* behind the door.’ ‘Do you know what it is? I’ll *bet* you don’t,’ triumphantly exclaims the little fellow.

‘I gueth,’ says the little guest—‘I gueth it’th the dark!’ ‘I knew you couldn’t. Why, it’s a *broom*—that’s all,—I gueth it’th the dark!’ and the young propounder laughed outright at the idea. ‘House full, hole full, can’t catch a bowl-full!’ ‘Oh, I know that! It’th thmoke!’

And so, with childish prattle and sweet content, the evening went away, as many an evening has done, never to return.

The circle gradually narrows round the fire. At last, they are all gone but you. Even LUCY has let out her 'intended,' as the neighbors call him, at the front door, and comes into the kitchen with very red cheeks, and shy as a bird. She glances at the clock, bounds away with a laugh, and now you hear her light, merry step, as she trips up stairs to the music of her own sweet thoughts.

You open the hall door; a great gust puffs out the light, but by the flashes of the fire, you see two long, narrow drifts of fine snow, that have sifted through the crevices round the outer door.

The wind has sighed itself to sleep, like a tired child, and soft, sweet tones of music seem to rise and fall in the snowy air. Now receding, now approaching; now dying, now swelling like a great Æolian. And it is an Æolian: that mighty harp with a single string, the Telegraph. And the fingers of the wind, in gentler mood, are twanging a lullaby to the storm.

Oh! mighty Harper is the Wind, and *here* is an instrument worthy of its handling: an orbit wherein the dumb thunder-bolt is hurled from mart to mart; a bolt that, like the thunder of Sinai, has grown articulate. It is the pulse of the world; the fibre of universal thought.

There, now, a wanderer from the land of gold has returned to New-York. It is morning. The clock is on the stroke of eight. Day has risen from the wave, and in his chariot of fire, has gone on towards the west, making his rounds of the globe. He has been gone a half hour. The glad word conveying the intelligence of that wanderer's arrival, has been committed to the telegraph. On it glides westward, westward still. Roll on, thou glorious chariot of day! The courier of love shall o'ertake thee yet. Nearer, nearer; the day and those words are side by side. The sun is distanced—is left behind—and the quivering lightning flutters in at the windows on Main Street, like some sweet bird

‘Let loose in eastern skies.’

And it is not yet eight of the clock in La Porte! So a few humble, loving syllables, that are nothing to you or to me, lead the great sun in his journey round the world.

THE Child-world, in this quarter, is in ‘an active state of unrest.’ The school in ‘the Quaker neighborhood’ have sent a challenge, in due form, to this

district, to spell ; so, to-night, ' the war of words ' is to be waged, in the white school-house on the hill.

There is a great overhauling of old ' Elementaries,' and a wonderful furbishing up of frontispieces, and turning over of clean collars, preparatory to the grand *mêlée*.

SPELLING SCHOOLS ! Have you forgotten them ? When, from all the region round about, they gathered into the old log school-house, with its huge fireplace, that yawned like the main entrance to Avernus. How the sleigh-bells—the old-fashioned bells, big in the middle of the string, and growing ' small by degrees and beautifully less ' towards the broad, brass buckle—chimed, in every direction, long before night—the gathering of the clans. There came one school, ' the Master '—give him a capital M, for he is entitled to it—Master and all, bundled into one huge, red, double sleigh, strown with an abundance of straw, and tucked up like a Christmas pie, with a half score of buffalo robes. There half a dozen ' cutters,' each with its young man and maiden, they two and no more. And there, again, a pair of jumpers, mounting a great, outlandish-looking bin, heaped up, pressed down and running over, Scripture measure, with small collections of humanity, picked up *en*

route, from a great many homes, and all as merry as kittens in a basket of wool. And the bright eyes, and ripe, red lips, that one caught a glimpse of, beneath those pink-lined, quilted hoods, and the silvery laughs that escaped from the woolen mufflers and fur tippets they wore then—who does not remember?—who can ever forget them?

The school house destined to be the arena for the conflict, has been swept and garnished; boughs of evergreen adorn the smoke-stained and battered walls. The little pellets of chewed paper have been all swept down from the ceiling, and two pails of water have been brought from the spring, and set on the bench in the entry, with the immemorial tin-cup—a wise provision indeed, for warm work is that spelling!

The ‘big boys’ have fanned and replenished the fire, till the old chimney fairly jars with the roaring flames, and the sparks fly out of the top, like a furnace—the oriflamme of the battle.

The two ‘Masters’ are there; the two schools are there; and *such* a hum, and *such* a moving to and fro! Will they swarm?

The oaken ferule comes down upon the desk with emphasis. What the roll of the drum is to armies,

that, the 'ruler' is to this whispering, laughing, young troop.

The challenged are ranged on one side of the house; the challengers on the other. Back seats, middle seats, low, front seats, all filled. Some of the fathers and grandfathers, who could, no doubt, upon occasion,

'Shoulder the crutch, and show how fields were won,'

occupy the bench of honor near the desk.

Now for the preliminaries: the reputed best speller on each side 'chooses.' 'Susan Brown!' Out comes a round-eyed little creature, blushing like a peony. Who'd have thought it! Such a little thing, and chosen first.

'Moses Jones!' Out comes Moses, an awkward fellow, with a shock of red hair, *shockingly* harvested, surmounting his broad brow. The girls laugh at him, but what he doesn't know in the 'Elementary,' isn't worth knowing.

'Jane Murray!' Out trips Jane, fluttered as a bride, and takes her place next to the caller. She's a pretty girl, but a sorry speller. Don't you hear the whispers round the house? 'Why, that's John's sweetheart.' John is the leader, and a battle lost

with Jane by his side, would be sweeter than a victory won, without her.

And so they go on, 'calling names,' until five or six champions stand forth ready to do battle, and the contest is fairly begun.

Down goes one after another, as words of three syllables are followed by those of four, and these again, by words of similar pronunciation and divers significations, until only Moses and Susan remain.

The spelling-book has been exhausted, yet there they stand. Dictionaries are turned over—memories are ransacked, for

‘Words of learned length and thundering sound,’

until, by and by, Moses comes down like a tree, and Susan flutters there still, like a little leaf aloft, that the frost and the fall have forgotten.

Polysyllable follows polysyllable, and by and by Susan hesitates just a breath or two, and twenty tongues are working their way through the labyrinth of letters in a twinkling. Little Susan sinks into the chink left for her on the crowded seat, and there is a lull in the battle.

Then, they all stand in solid phalanx by schools, and the struggle is, to spell each other down. And

down they go, like leaves in winter weather, and the victory is declared for *our* District, and the school is 'dismissed.'

Then comes the hurrying and bundling, the whispering and glancing, the pairing off and the tumbling in. There are hearts that flutter and hearts that ache; 'mittens' that are not worn, secret hopes that are not realized, and fond looks that are not returned. There is a jingling among the bells at the door; one after another the sleighs dash up, receive their nestling freight, and are gone.

Our Master covers the fire, and snuffs out the candles—don't you remember how daintily he used to pinch the smoking wicks, with fore-finger and thumb, and then thrust each hapless luminary, head first, into the tin socket?—and we wait for him.

The bells ring faintly in the woods, over the hill, in the valley. They are gone. The school house is dark and tenantless, and we are alone with the night.

Merry, care-free company! Some of them are sorrowing, some are dead, and all, I fear, are changed. SPELL! Ah! the 'spell' that has come over that crowd of young dreamers—over you, over me—will it ever, ever be dissolved? In 'the white radiance of Eternity!'

How, like the shadow upon the dial, thought is ever returning to the place of beginning ! Where we first began to live—where we first began to love ; to the trysting-place and the homestead, the play-ground and the grave-yard:

The Children of the Sun, where'er they roam,
Deem that the Gods to them, this boon have given,
That each freed spirit seeks its native home,
And wings from thence, a speedier flight to Heaven.

As some dim fountain—when day's golden chain
Leads captive, earth—unfolds its cloudy wings,
Sublimely seeks its native heaven again,
And o'er the sun, its rainbow glory flings ;

So when thy memory beams upon the thought,
Its pinions tremble for the homeward flight ;
O'er many a hallowed, many a heavenly spot,
It lingers long—'tis lingering there to-night.

It were not strange, if 'neath some sacred shade,
A tear should glitter on thy billowed breast ;
It were not strange, if o'er the buried dead,
Some heart should sigh, Here let me be at rest !

Home ! ever Home ! How glides the bird-like thought
Back to the roof-tree where it plumed its wing,
Ere tears had stained it, or the tempest caught
And strown the bower, where first it learned to sing.

The Last of Ten.

WHILE I write, a strange, sad scene is being enacted, one which hangs over the mind, as I think of it, a sombre cloud of thought. A noble being, in the full maturity of life, is nearing the last hours of his existence, and from present indications, 'by the turn of the tide,' to-night, he will cease to be a mariner of life.

To see the strong limbs settle into the repose of death, is sad at any time, but there are circumstances connected with this, which invest it with an unwonted and melancholy interest.

He is the last of TEN, who, within a single year, have died, one after another, and but a little while—a few days apart! I remember them all; I knew them well, and many a day have I passed with them during this eventful year. First (I will not mention names,) an old man died; but his locks were white, and his pulses chilled, and the tears of the mourners fell slow and freezingly round the shallow grave. The old, like withered leaves, hold to life by a frail tenure: there comes a husky breath, and they are

gone. Next went his brother, younger than he, a man of a cold, stern spirit; but he had friends—and who has not?—and so *he* died. And then a change came over a younger member of the family—a wild, boisterous, dashing blade, the musician of the group. He would have made a ‘King’s Trumpeter;’ and what blasts I have heard him sound! Such blasts as Scott said ‘were worth a thousand men.’ And I have heard him play dirges too. They played for *him* at last. ‘The daughters of music are brought low,’ and he sleeps. His gentle sisters three, as if they knew the way he led, by the tones of his spirit-bugle, followed him, one after one.

O hark! O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, further going!
O sweet and far, from cliff and star,
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

‘O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill, or field or river;
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow forever and forever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wide echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.’

The youngest went first; innocence knows no fear, and she passed away smiling—a gentle creature, full

of laughter and tears. The second and third—how well do I remember the last time I saw them ! They were dressed in flower-broidered robes, flowers in their hair, the tint of flowers upon their cheeks, and the fragrance of flowers in their breath. They wore broidered girdles of green, and they were all of a flutter, going to some *fête*. But they have gone together, and almost hand in hand, where flowers bloom all the year long, and where it is one grand *fête* from June to June again.

Then came one whom the heart aches to think of ; a magnificent being, fully rounded into womanhood. With eyes that looked into the soul, as warm, and clear, and noble as a summer Heaven ; with a voice full of sweetest music, and with grace in every motion. Living, who could help loving her ?—and dying, who could help weeping for her ?—I am not ashamed to say it, I wept ; I am not afraid to tell it, Nature wept ; I am not wild to fancy it, Heaven smiled, when she awaited admission on its star-lighted threshold.

But I haven't the heart to recall them all to-day. Enough to say, they are dead ; the tenth is now dying, and they will all be a family in Heaven. Who is there among my readers to give a tear or a thought to poor, departing OCTOBER ?

SHADOWS that out-live the sunshine, daguerreotypes are. I have been looking at one to-night—a picture of the dead. Dead? Oh, no!—that cannot be dead that we cannot forget.

Well do I remember when it was taken—a tearful April day; showers came out of the rainbows, and sunshine broke out of the clouds. Fitting emblem of her little life, and yours, and mine. They arrayed her in a white robe, folded her white hands upon her breast, wreathed white roses in her hair, and made her as ready as they could for the angels that waited without. There she lay, cold and motionless, but none of us could *make* her dead. Again and again, did I bring a mirror close to those sealed lips; once or twice, I fancied its surface was a little dimmed, but it was not so. There was the dear, pale face, nothing more. That little cloud of life had floated away for ever. Sleep and his brother had stood beside the couch, to claim her as she lay. *Both* won her, for she slept the sleep of death.

Oh, she was lovely! and as those fair lineaments settled to their last repose, it made the heart ache and the eye dim to look at them. How much there is in the thought, we shall see her like no more; mingled

with her kindred elements, her dust shall be strown to the winds. Her image is pictured now upon the heart, but hearts may break, memory be dimmed with tears and time. Had we but thought of this, the artist should have made her live upon his canvass. Such beauty should not quite depart. Too late—too late!

Far over the waters, in sunny France, in a laboratory, a workman is bending over a crucible and a furnace. Begrimmed with toil, nameless, the utterer of a language not our own. What is he to us, or we to him? Nothing.

It was morning, and through the half-drawn curtain, round that bed of death, a bright ray of sunshine streamed full upon the face of the dead, and grew pale—and well it might, for it was in the presence of Him who shall one day bid the sun put off his robes of glory for the garment of sackcloth—an instant fell, and then was flying out again into the free, glad gush of morning, and the music of the woods and the birds.

A polished plate—a magical mirror, just stayed it in its flight, and ere it fled, it left thereon the sweet memory it was flying with—the picture of the Dead. The eyes were closed, 'tis true, but then she looked so

sweetly sleeping there. Many times since, be sure, it has been bedewed with tears ; many times since, have lips been pressed upon it.

Radiant being ! beautiful MAY ! She flung but one shadow, and that only, when she died.

You have seen, sometimes, in a June morning, when the birds were in song and the breezes in tune, a sentinel star, that had out-watched the night, lingering on the bright threshold of day. You have watched it as it wavered and grew dim ; as it brightened and blushed ; as it paled into pearl, receded, and died.

The sky was all beauty, the world was all bliss—
Oh ! who would not pray for an ending like this ?
So my beautiful May passed away from life's even ;
So the blush of her being was blended with heaven ;
So the bird of my bosom fluttered up to the dawn—
A window was opened—my darling was gone !
A truant from time, from tears, and from sin,
For the angel on watch took the wanderer in.

WHAT an indictment could be 'found' against Time, if only he came within the jurisdiction of mortals. 'Count' after 'count'—how they follow one another.

Time has robbed youth of its step of lightness, and

its locks of gold, and its bounding heart of bliss. He has lifted Heaven away from us, as we have stood up in the full stature of men ; for to this the poet testified, when he said,

‘ It gives me little joy,
To think I’m farther off from Heaven,
Than when I was a boy.’

He has robbed manhood of its form erect, its eagle look, and its soldier tread. He has stolen beauty, line after line, and light after light, from the lips, the cheek, the brow of loveliness.

He has chilled the warmest pulses, dimmed the brightest visions, paralyzed the strongest hand, that ever throbbed with sympathetic pain, or swept the dismal horizon of human sorrow, or struck for God and the right.

He has effaced the inscriptions that love and memory have traced.

He has shrivelled and obliterated our parchments.

He has struck from the roll, names that were born to a good hope of immortality.

He has crumbled the walls of our old homesteads.

He has ‘ changed ’ the faces of our old friends.

He has made life too long for our hopes, but too brief for our deeds.

He has substituted the new for the old ; the things of to-day for the things of yesterday and for ever.

AND how have the architect, the painter, and the poet been battling against grim, relentless Time ? Go to Bunker's Hill, and ask them, ' What build ye now ? ' and they answer, ' Here swelled the first strain of Liberty's Anthem—here Warren fell—here one day in June, three quarters of a century ago—why it is Bunker Hill Monument ! ' So, indeed, it is ; but look at that mighty shaft, as it sublimely swings to the rising and setting sun. I tell you, it is more. You see there a *fortress*, a stronghold against Time. ' How the years drift over the world,' they said—they that stood around that crimsoned height. ' Those years will sweep the red record of the deed away.' TIME will do it, and the memory of that grand act shall be struck from the drama of our race. Not so—not so. We will pile up the granite ; we will stereotype the story ; we will emboss it upon the page of the globe ; we will build a citadel—aye, that's the word !—a CITADEL against Time. Is it to last an hundred years ? Then for an hundred years, we'll stand the siege of Time. Five hundred ? The garrison of memories shall be there still ! Storm on, all-

devastating Time, we'll stay thee here. Those stone—ah ! lay them well ! The clink of those trowels is a sublime defiance to him, to whom name and fame have been, in other days, as wrecks and weeds to the gray Atlantic.

In, from under the clear blue sky of heaven, we come to an humble chamber, guiltless of ornament. Therein is a man, and he bends over a canvass. The light of the setting sun plays in a halo round his head, and falls upon a picture. 'Tis of a dwelling, an humble dwelling, surrounded by old trees, and a hill rising in the distance, and a stream low murmuring in the fore-ground. His pencil deepens this shadow and that tint. The landscape is almost finished. 'What do you here ?' we ask. A light is kindled in his eye ; a glow is on his pale cheek ; he dashes his pencil upon the palette, as he exultingly exclaims, 'I have recalled it all ! There is the very tree from whose pendent limbs I swung, years and years ago ; and there is the window through whose little blue panes, day was wont to break upon my childish eyes, and there the stream where drifted my mimic sail, and there the hill where whirled my mimic mill. And there the roof—aye ! with the very moss upon its northern eaves—beneath which I loved my first

love and thought my first thought. All there!—a transcript from memory. The old house, or so they tell me, is dismantled; the roof lets in the stars; weeds have sprung up in the hearth, and the graveyard is more furrowed than ever. Let it crumble; let its dust be strown to the winds, but its image shall not fade. Time! do thy work; I have thee now! Efface the picture of that house from memory—it shall not be “lost to sight.” And ere thy fingers shall dim that canvass, I shall have gone beyond thy potent sweep.’ And well does he say, ‘I have triumphed over Time;’ and well does he exult, that with the noiseless weapon of the pencil, he has vanquished the conqueror of kings.

The Past is with us still.

When SCIENCE grasped a filmy thread of light,
That dimly floated in the empty air,
And dared to draw the silver woof of night,
Until she saw a STAR was clinging there,
She trembled at the vision she had seen :
It only told her that a star *had been* !

That starry tress had faded in its flight,
(So long it wandered through the blue abyss,)
Before it met a mortal's startled sight.

While yet it journeyed 'twixt that world and this,
Perhaps some hand had borne the wondrous urn,
Beyond the range of human thought's return ;

Perhaps extinguished—e'en the stars do die—
Ere Heaven unfolded to her earnest eye.

Things are around us that have ceased to be;
And starry hopes, extinguish'd long ago,
Still link us to the past. Who would be free,
Or give that tearful past for all we know,
Or dream, of bliss or blessing yet to come?
All, ALL is mortal, till it reach the tomb!
And all unblest until it find its wings!

That last year's Heaven of stars, oh! who would give
For aught beside? Filled with *translated* things,
Too bright to die, too beautiful to live.

The Old-Fashioned Mother.

OLD-FASHIONED Mothers have nearly all passed away with the blue check and homespun woolen of a simpler but purer time. Here and there one remains, truly 'accomplished,' in heart and life, for the sphere of home.

Old-fashioned mothers—God bless them!—who followed us with heart and prayer, all over the world—lived in our lives and sorrowed in our griefs: who knew more about patching than poetry; spoke no dialect but that of love; never preached nor wandered; 'made melody with their hearts;' and sent

forth no books but living volumes, that honored their authors and blessed the world.

If woman have a broader mission now, in Heaven's name, let her fulfil it! If she have aught to sing, like the daughters of Judah, let her sit down by the waters of Babel, and the world shall weep; like Miriam, let her triumph-strain float gloriously over crushed but giant wrong, and the world shall hear; but let the triumph and lament issue, as did the oracles of old, from behind the veil that cannot be rent: the 'inner temple' of sacred Home.

Within it, should be enshrined the divinity of the place. Here and here only, would we find woman; here imprison her—imprison her? Aye, as the lighthouse ray, that flows out, pure as an angel's pulses, into the night and darkness of the world—a *star beneath the cloud*; but brightest there—warmest there—*always* there, where Heaven did kindle it, within the precinct, the very altar-place of home!

It is related of Madame Lucciola, a renowned vocalist, that she ruined a splendid tenor voice by her efforts to imitate male singing. Many a sweet voice and gentle influence in the social harmony, has been lost to the world in the same manner. There is nothing more potent than woman's voice, if heard, not

in the field, or the forum, but at home. The song-bird of Eastern story, borne from its native isle, grew dumb and languished. Seldom did it sing, and only when it saw a dweller from its distant land, or to its drowsy perch there came a tone, heard long ago in its own woods. So with the song that woman sings ; best heard within Home's sacred temple. Elsewhere, a trumpet-tone—perhaps a clarion-cry, but the lute-like voice has fled : the ' mezzo-soprano ' is lost in the discords of earth.

The old homestead ! I wish I could paint it for you, as it is—no, no, I dare not say, as it is—as it *was* ; that we could go together, to-night, from room to room ; sit by the old hearth, round which that circle of light and love once swept, and there linger, till all those simpler, purer times returned, and we should grow young again.

And-how can we leave that spot, without remembering one form, that occupied, in days gone by, ' the old arm-chair : ' that old-fashioned MOTHER ?—one in all the world, the law of whose life was love ; one who was the divinity of our infaney, and the sacred presence in the shrine of our first earthly idolatry ; one whose heart is far below the frosts that gather so thickly on her brow ; one to whom we never grow

old, but, in 'the plumed troop' or the grave council, are children still; one who welcomed us coming, blest us going, and never forgets us—never!

And when, in some closet, some drawer, some corner, she finds a garment or a toy that once was yours, how does she weep, as she thinks you may be suffering or sad.

And when Spring

'Leaves her robe on the trees,'

does she not remember *your* tree, and wish you were there to see it in its glory?

Nothing is 'far,' and nothing 'long,' to *her*; she girdles the globe with a cincture of love; she encircles her child, if he be on the face of the earth.

Think you, as she sits in that well-remembered corner to-night, she dreams her trembling arm is less powerful to protect him now, stalwart man though he is, than when it clasped him, in infancy, to her bosom?

Does the battle of life drive the wanderer to the old homestead, at last? Her hand is upon his shoulder; her dim and fading eyes are kindled with something of 'the light of other days,' as she gazes upon

his brow : ' Be of stout heart, my Son ! No harm can reach thee here ! '

Surely, there is but one Heaven—one Mother—and one God.

But sometimes that arm-chair is set back against the wall, the corner is vacant, or another's, and they seek the dear, old occupant in the graveyard. God grant *you* never have ! Pray God, I never may !

There are some there, though, whom we loved—there *must* be, to make it easy dying ; some, perhaps, who were cradled on that mother's bosom ; some, perhaps, who had grown fast to our own.

The old graveyard in L—— ! How the cloudy years clear away from before that little acre in God's fallow field, and the memories return——

Broken Memories in Broken Rhymes.

There's a little graveyard, brother, where the Lombardy
poplars wave,
Forever and forever, and above a little grave ;
Though the greensward has subsided, and there's no one
there to tell—
'Twas when we were boys together—yet I should know it
well.

When we were boys together ! Oh ! how far we must have
run,
The matin and the vesper blend so mournfully in one.

I'm a-weary with the watching, through this being's cloudy
bars,
For the dear, dim days, my brother, that are rounded into
stars.

The last time I was there, brother, a robin had wove a nest,
In the little fence they builded round the sleeper in his rest ;
But the nest was silent, brother ; not a bird was there to sing
Where song itself once nestled, ere song had taken wing.

I am sure you must remember, the little grave I mean—
There are only you and I now, but there once was one
between :
'Twas before that grave was hollowed, and before that song
had fled,
And before they told me, weeping, that the beautiful was
dead.

Oh! they tell us of the future—of purer lives and perfect
men,
But I shouldn't wonder, brother, we were nearer Heaven
then ;
If by life's wild tempest driven, that sweet port we've drifted
past ;
Oh! send a pilot, gentle Heaven, to bring us back at last.

From home to home, my brother! Oh! how breathless were
the bliss,
To be the boys together there—in that world as in this!
Methought I heard a hail, brother, and it syllabled my name ;
Oh! ship your oar a moment, let us listen whence it came.

There away, like moonlight breaking, something dawning
through the dark!
Now the shadow shape is taking—sail of silver! silver
barque!

In the bow there stands an angel, and a cherub by her side;

And that cherub, trust me, brother, is 'the little boy that died.'

Angel? No! But wife and woman; she that looked me into love,

While below she sweetly waited for her wings, and went above.

Had I seen through her disguising, could I so have loved and mourned?

Oh! that loving, and that weeping, would have been to worship turned.

As a maiden at her window, watches Love's pale planet rise,
So my MARY's soul was watching, ever watching at her eyes.
As that maiden, footsteps hearing, from the darkened window flying,

So some angel, earth-ward nearing, lured my Mary into dying!

Oh! in what far seas we wander—for we must be off that shore,

Where none are ever stranded, yet none are heard of more.

I am sure there is no record left, of one that ever sailed,

Who was ever in such music, by such a vision hailed.

But that lonely graveyard, brother—in its bosom let me rest,
With the turf as green above me, as my childhood's feet impressed;

Where our mother's songs still linger, linger in the evening air,

Sweetly dreamless could I slumber—slumber there, if any where!

When this being's wild campaigning, and the dreary march
is done,

Will you bear me then, my brother, where that march at
morn begun?

But remember—not a mourner! Let no tears be shed for
him,

For whose worthless sake when living, loving eyes could e'er
grow dim.

Will you rear a tablet, brother, with this simple emblem
graced,

Just a female figure bending—on her lips a finger placed?

Thus they'll read it who may linger: 'Silent he, and silent
we;

What he was—but that's all over!—what he is, is naught to
thee!'

THERE is a story told, some where, of a celebrated musician, who lay upon his dying bed. A youth entered an adjoining apartment, sat down to a piano, and began to play a tune. For some reason, he stopped abruptly in the midst of a strain, and left the room. The air was a favorite one with the dying son of song, and the notes untouched, so haunted him as he lay there, that he rose from his couch, seated himself at the instrument, took up the tune, where the youth had left it, played it out, returned to his pillow, and in a moment, was dead.

I know not that it is true, but it is touching and suggestive enough to be so.

The world is full of life ; each life is a tune ; so the world is a great Orchestra ; and of them all, how few tunes are played through !—how many ended as they were not begun !

Marches are sounded every day : strong, brave marches, that end too soon in ‘ a dying fall.’

Whirling waltzes, set off to the time of the youngest, merriest hearts, subside into dirges, sad and slow.

Pæans turn to complaints, and all, at last, are hushed in the measured beat of the ‘ muffled drums ’ of life.

And of all these strains of hope and harmony, how many are unended—no dying musician to take them up, when those who struck them first, are dumb or dead.

But isn't it a pleasant thought that *perhaps* somebody may take up the tune, when we are dead—not a note lost, not a jar, not a discord, but all a swan-like harmony ? Perhaps ! perhaps ! There is something hollow, like a knell, in that word. The veil that hides the future is woven of ‘ perhaps ; ’ in it the greatest ills have their solace, the brightest joys their cloud.

The broken strains of thought in this little book, are, as you will not grieve to know, now ended, and no body in the next room to play on.

May neither your life nor mine, be composed of random 'scores,' but be a beautiful Anthem, harmony in all its parts, melody in all its tones; not a strain wanting, not a note out of the tune; till 'the daughters of music are brought low,' and the life-anthem is

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